

The Fall

by lone wolf legendary

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Summary: Over the course of the Fall of Reach, billions died to the Covenant, but some managed to survive. This is the story of one such group of survivors who after escaping reach, find themselves crash landed on a planet where the greatest threat to humanity is not the Covenant... but Titans. How will the adapt and who can they trust.

1. Prologue: The Fall of Reach

****Author's Notes:****

****Hello Everyone! I've been visiting this website now for about four years now, so I finally decided to give back to this website by writing a story myself. Hope you all enjoy!****

****Note: I do not own Halo nor Shingeki no Kyojin.****

* * *

><p>Prologue

[Recorded date /2552]

It had been two weeks since the departure of the Pillar of Autumn's from Reach, and with it, Noble Six's final mission was completed... but still he fought. The words of his fallen brethren still etched into his mind "_Make it count."_ He owed it to Noble. He would fight to his last breath, and bring as many of these bastards with him as he could. To his credit he had already sent thousands to their grave including an armor division that seemed to have been specifically sent to deal with this lone Spartan, but these achievements meant nothing. For as long as there was no escape from Reach, all he could do was look forward and determine the best course of action to maximize damage to the Covenant forces that still occupied Reach

before Death's embrace finally caught up to Six and forced him to the world after... to fight again.

* * *

><p>[Recorded date 2552]

This was it, death had finally found him.

In his exhaustion, Six had fallen into this final Covenant trap. They had tapped into Reach's personal UNSC emergency encryption and had fooled many a survivor to Rally Point Zulu. The location was a death trap, little cover outside of a few UNSC field buildings, and the body's of fallen soldiers and Spartans alike laid askew everywhere; an account to this fact.

Six himself had already been fighting for hours pushing back wave after wave of Covenant forces out of Rally Point Zulu, but the damage was done. He was trapped with no options for exfiltration, dwindling ammo, and mounting damage to his armor. The Spartan, wounded and cornered, now was truly the lone wolf; ready to die clawing and biting his way into the life after.

Finally after pushing back a group of high ranking Elites. The Spartan stumbled, and upon catching himself on the ground, coughed up a chunk of flesh blood on the inside of his visor. In this moment, Six realized just how damaged his visor had become, with three large cracks now overtaking most of the visor and the new coat of blood hazing most of his vision beyond the helmet. If anything this was a testament to the tenacity of the fight that had taken place in the last few hours...

But the Spartan quickly pushed that thought aside. The helmet was near worthless at this moment and thus had to be removed. So, slowly, with muscles screaming in protest, the Spartan raised his hands to the release clamps and with the unmistakable sound of the snap-hiss removed his worn helmet. Quickly placing it down to his side, he moved to pick up his MA37 assault rifle and stumbling back to his feet, he began the fight anew. Knowing full well that this would be it; no more breaks. If he had to, he would push into them until he breathed no more.

To his surprise the next fifteen seconds where a blur to the Spartan-no doubt a byproduct of blood loss, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion. But he could recall that he had gunned down four of the seven Elites that had cornered him: two were gunned down by his rifle, another by his standard issue M6G side arm, and the fourth was cut through with his knife before being having its life ended by a pistol shot to the brain. The entire time, plasma bolts splashed around him, scorching the ground and turning the sand into molten glass. Several direct hits fried his shield and nearly melted through a shoulder plate. Blood seeped from cuts in his armor, creating a trail of crimson on the ground, from where he moved.

But Six didn't feel any pain. in those fifteen seconds he had detached himself from his body-becoming death itself as it would seem- watching the last moments of Noble Six's last stand.

As the surviving Elites moved in for the kill, one of the three pushed Six to the ground bringing Six back to his body. Six couldn't

help but let out a sad smile as he batted away an Elite to his side and kicked off a silver Elite who was trying to end this fight. Even if they killed him they would also die with him. For after the package was delivered to the Autumn, he had rigged his armor-as a failsafe-to overload after his neural interface stopped receiving data from his brain. In essence, when he died, his armor would detonate severally damaging or killing anything within a twelve foot radius of his body.

Finally, after the silver Elite again lunging to kill the downed Spartan and missed him by a hair. The Elite to Six's right ignited his energy dagger and moved for the kill. Unlike the previous attack, there was no room for the Spartan to maneuver around this death blow, so he stared down the Elite as he waited the milliseconds for it all to end...

****'Crack'****

But it didn't.

The head of the _to be_ Spartan killer simply ceased to exist well before the sound of the weapon reached the downed Spartan. To the Spartans highly trained ears, it was unmistakably the sound of a SRS 99 Anti-Material rifle that could be heard, like distant thunder, reverberating throughout the desert wasteland.

Just as the Spartan comprehended the sound of the first shot a second ****'Crack' ****filled the air as the silver Elite, which was all too eager to kill the Spartan, had its head removed. The final Elite, recognizing that there was a new foe, Roared a defiant battle cry as it momentarily forgot about the downed Spartan, to look for the new adversary. A mistake that would cost the Elite dearly, as Noble Six summoned up the last of his strength to grab one of the plasma Swords from the dead Elites and rushing to his feet dove the plasma blade deeply into the sole surviving Elites chest as the Spartan landed with the full weight of the MJOLINR armor on the Elite. And with the emendate threat dealt with, the Spartan stood up and surveyed the landscape.

One, no, two beams of light could barely be seen in the distance. _Two Snipers, _the Spartan surmised, but was quickly distracted away from as he heard the unmistakable sound of a warthog. _It's been far to long since I've heard a friendly vehicle._ The Spartan thought as he gathered up what he could from the battle field, all the while watching the approaching warthog to make sure it really existed.

In all, by the time the warthog stopped in front of him, he had gathered up three energy swords, his pistols, his rifle, his damaged helmet, and over two dozen plasma grenades. Even though his helmet was irreparably damaged it still housed a fragment of Noble Teams AI, "Dot," which under a cacophony of situations could be essential to the Spartans continued survival.

"Need a ride Spartan?" The ODST in the driver's seat called as the warthog screeched to a stop.

The Spartan only nodded as he quickly moved towards the warthog, gave a brief glance to the other occupant of the warthog. Another ODST by the unmistakable black armor, who was keeping the warthogs gun to the sky as she slowly angled the gun left and right watching for any

Covenant air support. As Noble Six climbed his way into the warthog, the driver had already put the warthog into motion, and soon the vehicle was screaming down the barren wasteland that once was Reach.

Almost immediately after getting the warthog back up to a breakneck speed the driver began talking to the Spartan. "It was lucky that we found you when we did, Spartan. A few more minutes and you would have been fighting the war on the other side." He paused for a second to glance at the Spartan, "I guess that makes us even, then. After all, you did save me and my Squad back in New Alexandria when the fighting got the thickest.. I wish I could say that their still in the fight, though..." The ODSI shook himself out of his memories before continuing.

"Right, I'm Captain Ian Schmitt of the 10th Shock Trooper Battalion, Bullfrog squad. Back there," Captain Schmitt pointed behind himself, "is Lance Corporal Ellysia Langnar, lone survivor of the 19th Shock Trooper Battalion stationed in this sector. In all, we're the last Shock Troopers active in this sector, hell, we're probably the last active members on this continent." Schmitt took a moment to regain his composure with a deep breath before continuing, "By now you've already put together the fact that we aren't the two that pulled the trigger on those two Elites that almost ended you. The ones who did, your guardian angels, would be Corporal Miranda Stacker and Private First Class Liam Schultz of Hades Corps. They're not in visible range for all of our safety..."

Six understood why, it was a common practice for survivors, since the Covenant war went into full steam for survivors to stay barely in radio range to minimize the chances that everyone in the group would be found if a Covenant patrol where to stumble upon one of the vehicles in the survivors group. This would allow that found group to become sacrificial lambs to spare other survivor's in the larger group by leading the Covenant patrol and subsequent troops away from the convoy of survivors and their destination.

"Now besides those two, there is a third vehicle in our group containing an ONI Operative, I believe he codename was Foresight, and a turncoat Insurrectionist named Benjamin Galik. As you can probably imagine our ONI Operative has become the impromptu leader of our rag-tag group of survivors. No surprises there."

Feeling that the Captain might fall into a tangent Noble Six took that moment to ask a question that had been burning the back of his mind since the Captain had set the warthog barreling down the landscape. "Where are we heading?"

The Captain was quick to answer that question, "A farmhouse." He then took a moment give the Spartan an expression the just seethed the sentence, I don't believe what I'm about to tell you, "Our insurrectionist friend believes that there is still a 'lifted' civilian vassal beneath the farmhouse. Something I doubt..."

"Think positively Captain, it's either there or its not, and if it's not, then we go out in a blaze of glory then," suggested Corporal Langnar, who finally decided to joined the conversation.

To this suggestion the Captain sighed, "It's best to expect the realistic, that why we won't be heartbroken when it's not there."

Deciding to concede a bit to the Corporal, to end this conversation, he added "I'm not saying it won't be there, I'm just saying... I'll believe it when I see it."

And at that exact moment, a Banshee appeared lazily moving outside of an Ionized gas storm in the distance. Ending the conversation where it stood, as all individuals in the warthog tensed at the possibility of being found in the open. For a few tense minutes the Banshee drifted just within visibility of the warthog before lazily flying into another Ion cloud leading away from the warthog's destination. In the clear for the moment all members of the warthog breathed a sigh of relief, having just dodged a bullet, but this would not be the last time they would run into a patrol before reaching their destination.

* * *

><p>Three Hours Later...<p>

"So this is the farm," Captain Schmitt stated as he brought the warthog to a stop next to the other two warthog that the group were using. As the Spartan got out of the warthog and made his way towards the farmhouses' entrance where the marines were gathering around the ONI operative and paramilitary civilian. The Spartan took a moment to take in the surroundings. The farm, which no doubt was prosperous over two months ago, wasn't much to look at anymore. The foliage around the farmhouse was long dead and it appeared that a small scale firefight had taken place on the premises in the past few weeks...

As the Spartan approached the group he heard the tail end of Operative Foresight's instructions "...Corporal Langnar, Corporal Stacker, and Private Schultz stay in your respective warthogs and be prepared to move them into the hanger as soon as Benjamin here opens the door. As for Captain Schmitt, Spartan B312, Benjamin Galik, and myself, we will be going into the house. If we meet any resistance it is to be dealt with, with lethal force. After that, Benjamin will hit the switch located within the house and we all regroup inside the hanger bay. Is that understood?" After a chorus of yes sir's, the groups departed and began performing their assigned tasks.

Within minutes the house was secured, and Benjamin began looking along a discreet wall for the switch that would lead to their miracle ride off of Reach.

"Wow, umm.. Sir, you're going to want to check this out!" Captain Schmitt yelled from a storage room.

"This better be pretty damn important," Operative Foresight announced as he and the rest of the house group entered the storage room. Almost immediately everyone understand why this warranted such a quick response. "That's.. That's Spartan armor. How did that get here?" Foresight turned to the only living Insurrectionist for answers.

"I honestly have no idea. Thomson never explained how he got the 'hotter' contraband that he did... and I'm afraid he took those answers to the grave." With that Benjamin pointed towards a body laying besides a window. On a closer inspection, you could see that Thomson had put up quite a fight before taking a plasma round to his

head, resulting in a nice fist sized hole in his head that had oozed and solidified across the rest of his face and upper body.

"Damn," was the only muttered response to the sight of the body before everyone went back to business.

"Spartan, grab that gear. You'll probably need it. Not to mention it doesn't feel right to leave it here, in enemy territory." commanded the ONI Operative as he moved back to supervising Benjamin, as he searched for the switch. As the Spartan gathered up the boxes of contraband gear, he noticed something truly peculiar. This.. This was his spare gear to be used during Saber Program testing... _How did it get here_?

****'Hiss'****

"That was it." Stated Benjamin as he moved away from a consoled panel, ripping the Spartan from his thoughts. "We only have two minutes to get in the hanger before the doors automatically reset." And with that, the group quickly left the house and entered the recently exposed tunnel to the smugglers hanger bay.

Upon entering the hanger bay Noble Six could hear Captain Schmitt whispering, "Well I'll be damned, it does exist." When he spotted the civilian vessel in the cramped underground hanger. As the group walked into the hanger bay, Benjamin stretched his arms out. "The _Mary Celeste..._. It may not look like much but, god willing, it's our ticket out of here."

The Spartan like the rest of the survivors, took a moment to take in all the details of the vessel. To be honest it wasn't a pretty sight. The ship, which was a relatively new modal, had been 'upgraded' by the insurrectionists to contain three gun mounts on the top of the vessel and two on the bottom. Even for the Spartans well trained eye it was difficult to tell exactly what model of anti-ship weapons these guns where, since it was obvious that these guns were constructed out of various scrap and stolen gun parts. The Spartan himself had seen multiple makeshift gunboats that Insurrectionist had attempted to use over his short career, but this by far was the worst constructed one he had seen to date, which explained why it was still in the hanger. This group of insurrectionist where beyond green and outside of having some good thief's, they had no idea what to do when it came down to an actual firefight..._but Benjamin was still alive, so either he was the brains of this operation or he was one lucky son-of-a-bitch_. If the craftsmanship on the guns where any measure of how the ship was taken care of, it would be a miracle, all over again, if this vessel was actually space worthy.

A thought echoed by Operative _Foresight_. "Damn, you did one hell of a number on this one, but can it fly?"

Benjamin was quick to replay to that question, though in a less than ideal manor, as he worked his way around the warthog lineup that was ascending into the ship's cargo hold. "It can fly. It might not be pretty, but it can fly." He paused as he reached the mouth of the ship and stated bluntly. "I'll be honest, this ship was designed to get away from you guys. If you where to ever find out about our operation, this was our escape plan. Obviously we hadn't finished working on the vessel, but that's the hand we're all dealt. We may not be able to take any punches but the ships fast, and those guns

do work. They were installed to keep a few Pelicans at bay, I'm sure it can do the same to any covenant patrols in the area... at least until we can jump into Slipspace." With that Benjamin led the group to the bridge of the ship, where they would discuss their exit strategy.

* * *

><p>Forty minutes later...<p>

After some deliberation and a quick final check the seven survivors where ready to finally leave Reach. The Spartan was voted to be the ships pilot do to his extensive knowledge of spaceflight to do his Spartan training and the Saber Program. Corporal Stacker and Private Schultz where given the tasks of navigations and communications respectively. Specifically Private Schultz was to watch for covenant air support and relay that information to the other six survivors, four of which were operating different weapons on the ship with the assistance of the Dot fragment from Six's helmet.

"We'll only get one chance at this... Is everyone ready?" To the Spartan it almost sounded like the Operative Foresight was having second thought on this operation, but when no one voiced any concerns he gave Six the OK to start the assent. Muttering to himself an old idiom "We'll make it on a wing and a prayer."

Within moments the farm above the hanger bay divided like the Red Sea, allowing the ship, the Mary Celeste, to rise from the grave as it would have appeared and take flight on an exit vector from Reach. It would be five minutes for the Slipspace drive to worm up for use and until that time, they'd have to play a deadly game of cat and mouse with the Covenant.

The first minute when by without a hitch, but within fifteen seconds of that a Banshee had noticed the vessel on radar and was making its way to intercept the ship. A mistake for the Elite pilot. Not expecting the civilian vessel to be armed with anti-ship cannons the Banshee was destroyed before it had the chance to let off its own projectiles against the civilian vessel.

It wasn't until there was less than a minute on the Slipspace drives timer did the Mary Celeste meet any true resistance, in the form of a Seraph squadron. Now the Spartan had push the vessel to its limits to keep the Seraphs from narrowing in on a kill shot, all the while having to listen to the timer slowly ticking down until they could escape. Even with all the makeshift firepower on the vessel, they weren't having any luck punching a hole through any of the Seraphs' shields, putting that much more pressure on the Spartan and the Mary Celeste to avoid Seraph shots.

15 seconds... The engines of the Mary Celeste where well into the red zone and would soon shutdown permanently if the Spartan wouldn't lay off of the thrusters, but as seven plasma rounds landed glancing blows on the vessel, that wasn't going to happen.

10 Seconds... Warning siren went off indicating that one of the vessels four engines had gone offline. A second prior to the siren going off several plasma rounds had struck that location of the ship, but it was impossible to know at that moment if the engine failed because it was struck by a plasma round or if it had simply given out

the stresses the Spartan was pushing the engines... Within the span of the next ten seconds the Spartan expected to know the answer.

5 Seconds... The coordinates where locked and the Spartan was forced to stabilizing the ship for the Slipspace jump. And at the same time he did that, the battle to take down the Mary Celeste changed completely. "Something's wrong. The Seraph's are backing off of us."

2 Seconds... Before anyone could respond to the Spartans comment, the answer appeared before them. A Slipspace portal, big enough for a Covenant Cruiser, began to open up. It covered the exact coordinates that the Mary Celeste was going to punch a hole into Slipspace at-something that had never been done before. The ramifications of punching a hole into Slipspace where a current Slipspace portal existed had never been tested, but doing something like that couldn't be good.

0 Seconds... The Mary Celeste opened up her own portal, causing the larger portal, as well as theirs, to swell and change. By this time the Covenant Cruiser had only just begun to immerge from the Slipspace portal, but the change caused by opening the second portal was already having visible effects. By the time the Mary Celeste began

>entering its own portal, the Covenant Cruiser's belly, still in Slipspace prior to the second portal opening, had compacted into the front portion of the Cruiser as its body seemed to be propelled out of the portal faster than the front of the Cruiser was.<p>

"Oh, shit." Was the monotone response of Operative Foresight as the vessel entered Slipspace.

* * *

><p>Upon Entering Slipspace...<p>

The sounds of sirens and the groan of metal had already become common to the individuals inside the Mary Celeste after the five heart racing minutes of fighting to get to Slipspace, but upon entering Slipspace, these noises where multiplied by the hundreds, as every siren and sheet of metal on the vessel seemed to go off or groan almost simultaneously. On top of that, internal power seemed to be fluctuating randomly as both the lights and consoles' began to fade, burst, or return to normal at random intervals.

Within a minute several fires had been started throughout the ship do to malfunctions and overloads. Dot quickly was able to put out most of these fires by venting the oxygen in all compartments the ship besides the bridge, but for those bridge fires everyone on the bridge who was not attempting to stabilize power or bring the ship out of Slipspace where furiously working on containing the fires.

At three minutes into this Slipspace hell, support beams where beginning to fail as the ship's hull began to peel away in several places. On the bridge, the fires had been put out and power, as unstable as it still was, was stable enough for the Spartan to get a Slipspace portal opened up, bringing the Mary Celeste back into normal space.

But this Slipspace wouldn't be without its casualty. For as the Mary

Celeste_ decelerated back into normal space, several weakened support beams failed and collapsed into the ships' deck. One of which was located on the bridge of the ship...

'Thump'

"Anyone Hurt?"

"_Foresight_ down!"

"Dammit, he's dead.."

WARNING: COLLISION IMMINENT, SUGGEST IMMEDIATE COARSE CORRECTION

"The engines aren't starting.."

"Shit, don't tell me we left Reach only to crash and burn on another planet!?"

_End prologue. _

* * *

><p>So, that's the prologue!

As a final note, I want to thank everyone who bothered to read this to completion, as well as, my two friends who-more or less-beta read for me. Thanks again DeadzManWalking and xXCOMIZARXx for all of your help.

**Please if you are inclined, leave a review... A constructive review preferably. **

**Until next time, have a great day everyone! **

2. Chapter 1: A Falling Mystery

Hello Again, Everyone! This is lone wolf legendary with another chapter coming your way.

But before I get into it , I most certainly want to thank everyone who has read, faverated, followed, and reviewed this Story so far. Without you all ,I wouldn't be posting this chapter now. Also, thank you, SmartY, UnknownShape, Tormould, JoshMaxii, DanAbnettFan1997, and Asura94 for spending the time to review the prologue.

This will NOT be a Curb Stomp story.

Again, I do not own Halo or Shingeki no Kyojin.

** Chapter One: A Falling Mystery.**

* * *

><p>Date: 917/2552 0114 hours

UNSC Civilian Vessel _Mary Celeste_

Decaying orbit of unknown planet

The mood was tense on the bridge of the Mary Celeste. For a brief moment, everyone was still. The survivors stood silently, staring in disbelief at the body of the group's former, impromptu leader, Operative Foresight. His motionless body lay crushed under one of the ship's support beams. A pool of blood slowly grew around him. Then, as if to snap the survivors out of their trance, a voice broke over the ship's intercom.

**WARNING: COLLISION IMMINENT, SUGGEST IMMEDIATE COARSE CORRECTION
**_

And with Dots words of warning, the survivors jumped back into their present, dire situation. With Noble Six quickly noticing the ships biggest problem..

"The engines aren't starting."

To which Captain Schmitt emphatically stated, with the stress of the past few hours creeping into his voice "Shit, don't tell me we left Reach only to crash and burn on another planet!?"

It was clear to the Spartan that he would have rather went out, guns blazing on Reach, then go quietly, helplessly crashing on an unknown planet. Something the Spartan agreed with, but this realization wasn't worth reflecting on, he needed to get these engines online...

Out of the corner of Six's eyes, he could see Corporal Stacker and Private Schultz ripping apart consoles and circuit boxes in an attempt to reestablish connection and power to the ships engines. Hades Corp where notorious for only excepting highly qualified engineers into their Corp, and these two were a testament to that standard. But in recognizing Stacker and Schultz' Corp had awoken another memory within the Spartan, that he again, was quick to repel as he continued to work on getting the engines to respond.

With each passing second, time become even more menacing as an impact clock counted down their few remaining seconds alive. No one dared to check the time till they would collide with the planet. All eyes remained inside the cabin. Nobody looked out of the ship's forward windows to watch the planet grow in front of them, for only death lie beyond those invisible barriers. The only thing that was reminding them of the passage of time was Dot, and her repeating message for a course correctionâ€¦|

But finally it was done, and the Spartan was quick to let everyone know it. "Engines 2 and 4 are back online!" He began pushing the two engines to stabilize the vessel's landing. It was too late. The Mary Celeste was trapped in the planet's gravity well, and with too little power to escape it, the ship was going to crash. But, the question was, how hard?

As the engines jolted everyone within the ship, those who had not strapped themselves into a seat quickly scurried to do so. As they buckled in, they looked up to the forward windows to see something truly unexpected.

They could see what appeared to be a human build wall, but not an

ordinary wall. This wall appeared to be 50 meters tall, something that took no genius to know was far too tall to serve any useful purpose. It was overkill to be used as a means to prevent flooding or to serve as a divider to keep local wildlife out. But it was also equally worthless if it was meant to prevent an invading army from attacking, since the advent of ballistic weapons and the ability of flight bypassed such methods of defense..

But that train of thought was quickly ended as more sirens within the ship began to scream emergency as the wall disappeared beneath them and the detail of the ground grew quicker in front of them. The control panel began to sparkle with warning lights. With all the Spartan could muster he tried to pull the ship out of its death dive. Only partially succeeding, he attempted to maneuvered the ship in an attempt to avoid what appeared to be a city in the distance. A few more seconds would tell them all if he had succeeded.

As the ship finally hit the ground, it once again groaned and shook. The power within the bridge once again went out. But unlike the last time the ship went through this turbulence, the power seemed to have been cut to the bridge. Sirens were no longer crying for attention. A muted mercy to everyone's ears in the vessel, as a cacophony of other noises bombarded those who were still alive within the ship. Allowing for sounds of breaking glass and another, more sinister noise from being heard...

* * *

><p>Year 850<p>

Survey Corps, Outside Wall Rose

Two hours into the 56th Expedition

For Commander Erwin Smith of the Survey Corps, the 56th Expedition into Titan territory was going as well as anyone could have hoped. So far, the expedition had only suffered a dozen casualties with one injury and were making good progress towards the next forward base site that needed to be constructed for the eventual recapturing of Wall Maria. This forward base in particular was to be constructed a few hundred meters away from small town on the edge of an encroaching forest. No more than a two hour ride from their current position, if they didn't run into any more Titan opposition.

The sheer fact that only a little over five years ago, human settlements were active in this area was a chilling reminder of just how fragile humanity's position was in these dire times of Titan encroachment. It was always gnawing at the back of Erwin's mind that if the Survey Corps fails to regain Wall Maria, it would spell the slow extinction of the human race. For as an animal will eventually die if left in an enclosed space, humanity if left enclosed in the two surviving walls would eventually die a similar painfully slow death...

These dark, brooding thoughts were interrupted when a member of the Survey Corps in his company called for his attention.

"Commander Erwin!"

Upon Erwin turning to face the soldier who called his name, the

soldier turned his attention forward and upward as he pointed to a point of light in the sky. "What do you make of that?"

It took a few seconds for Erwin's eyes to fully lock on to the light, and in that time the light had appear to have grown by quite a margin. At first Erwin thought it looked like a typical asteroid falling into the planets air, but then, after a few more seconds something amazing happened.

It changed trajectory.

It was a subtle shift, only truly noticeable by the fact that the object began to glow brighter as it-as it would seem- attempted to level off with the ground. Something that it didn't seem to completely succeed at doing, as it glowed brighter and brighter, barreling closer to the ground and out of sight...

In all, less than a minute had passed since the object was first brought to his attention, and now, he knew it was something... peculiar. He couldn't shake the feeling that whatever that was, it could offer the Survey Corps and humanity at large, a better chance or even an edge against the Titans. And with what luck, the object seemed to have landed -if his guess was correct, only a fifteen minutes ride away from their next forward base.

With this in mind he called out two Squad Leaders in his entourage that he wanted to explore the site. "Levi, Hanji,"

"hmm."

"Yes, Commander Erwin?"

"When we get to the base site, have your squads ready. We're going to explore whatever it is that crashed over there." All the while Erwin never took his eyes off of the distant point where he was sure that the object had landed.

"Waa, you're going to join us Erwin?" Hanji was shocked that Erwin would want to be present for such a thing. He was always the type to stay at the Base sites, make sure the construction was done and prepared properly.

Erwin grunted a laugh before replying, "This... This is something that I think I need to see firsthand."

That seemed to persuade Hanji but, it did little to sway Levi to even want to explore this particular crash site. "Are you sure Erwin? It's probably just a rock."

Erwin didn't deny that possibility, "It might be... but I have a feeling it isn't." He was quick to add, "Now go tell your Squads to prepare. The rest of the Squads will continue this expedition as planned, so we mustn't waste time."

With that Hanji and Levi returned to their respective squads to explain to them the change in plans.

* * *

><p>"So, Commander Erwin wants us to check that meteor's crash site?

There's going to be nothing there but a crater and some space rocks at most." Stated Oruo, mimicking Levi's original thoughts about this mission.<p>

"That might be, but Erwin himself will be joining us, as well as, Hange's squad. So, be prepared for the worst." With that Levi, maneuvered his horse away from his squad and rode back towards Erwin. No doubt in an attempt to persuade Erwin out of doing this escapade.

As Levi moved out of earshot, Petra finally asked a question that had been on her mind since she was told about this mission. "I wonder what we will actually find out there?"

This, to the dismay of Oruo, "We are going to find absolut-" was all he was able to manage before he bit down on his tongue hard. Ending the conversation there, and shifting Petra's thoughts to shaming Oruo about taking while on horseback...again.

* * *

><p>Two Hours Later...<p>

The eighteen member group, containing Commander Erwin, Captain Levi, Hanji Zoe, and their respective squads broke off of the main contingent of Survey Corps' members to begin their mission of discovering what exactly had fallen from the sky earlier that day. From the moment that the group broke off from the main group they could see a large smoke cloud that had formed on the far side of town, marking the impact site. Unfortunately, from the group's current position it was impossible to tell what exactly had crashed.

For the next three minutes the group carefully moved across an open field towards the town and the impact site hidden behind it. During this time an odd feeling began to grow between the group, a feeling that they were being watched. It was eerie for all involved, no Titans to be seen, yet it felt like eye where watching them, waiting in the town in front of them... And then it happened.

A group of five Titans burst from the tree line over a kilometer to the left of the eighteen member group.

This was bad. There group was still around a kilometer away from the relative safety and increased maneuverability of the town, but still everyone went into action. Quickly the group split-up into their three separate squads and moved away from each other in the hope of separating the five Titans into smaller more manageable groups.

The strategy worked, for the five Titans quickly separated to follow their chosen pray. Two Titans had chosen to attack Hanji's squad, a single large ten meter class Titan was following Erwin's squad, and the final two Titans where after Levi's squad.

Each group fluidly began to work with each other to kill their groups Titan adversaries. Within thirty seconds of the Titan attack in earnest, two Titans laid dead. One had been killed by Hanji's group and the other by Levi's squad. Commander Erwin's squad was also making headway at killing its own Titan problem.

But the group of eighteen was not without its own casualties. Hanji's squad had lost one individual when he had slipped on an attack, thus ending up on the ground between the Titan pair which were attacking his squad. Erwin had also lost a member to his own squad when their Titan stumbled and crushed one member of his squad who was unable to get out from underneath the Titan before it hit the ground.

However, before the groups could finish off the remaining Titans, another Titan appeared from the forest... This one was running.

"An abnormal!" someone yelled as the seven meter tall Titan rushed towards the closest humans to it. These humans happened to be Levi's squad which were no more than two hundred meters away from the forest edge.

But it was too late. By the time that soldier had noticed the abnormal Titan it was already closing into Levi's squad. Oruo and Petra had just closed in for a double slice on the remaining normal seven meter class Titan when the abnormal Titan came in view of the two Survey members. Already in the downward strike of their attack, there was no way that they could maneuver away at that moment.

As time slowed for the two Survey members, they're eyes darted for their fellow members only to realize that they were just out of range to be able to stop this new titan before it could attack them.

They were going to die.

And then they heard it. A sound so unfamiliar, yet familiar. It sounded like a gun, but a gun that they had never heard before. Then they heard the reverberations of the sound again through the trees, the sound of distend thunder.

'Crack'

The abnormal Titan began to fall only a few meters away from the duo and with that Oruo and Petra finished their strike on the regular Titan. Which fell moments after the abnormal Titan. With their immediate threat dealt with, Petra looked to where the abnormal Titan was last standing and could see a trail blazed in the air itself, from the point where the abnormal Titan last stood to a building on the outskirts of the town... And, for a moment, she saw the flash of light off of glass, before she turned to assist the other groups in finish off the remaining Titans.

End Chapter 1

* * *

><p>That's the end of Chapter 1!

Next Chapter: Ghost Town

Again, I want to thank my two friends, DeadzManWalking and xXCOMIZARXx for helping me out by beta testing this chapter.

Additional Note: I'

**And again, thanks everyone for reading and have a wonderful

day!**

****Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed.****

* * *

><p>Interesting Note: From my research on the two fictions, its interesting to note that when it comes to named Characters: Shingeki no Kyojin has Character heights ranging from 4'9" to 6'3" but seem to be focused on smaller individuals, while all named non-Spartan individuals in the haloverse seem to be 5'7" or taller. This was just something I felt worth mentioning.

3. Chapter 2: A Ghost Town

Hello, Lone wolf Legendary with another chapter coming at you!

I don't know if it felt like a long time between chapters, but it did to me. So, I've decided that around twice a week I'll leave an update on my profile to tell you all how the next chapter's coming along. I'll be honest most of the wait between chapters has been due to waiting for DeadzManWalking to finish Beta-ing my chapters. Which reminds me, I went back and revised the first two Chapters. Just cleaned things up a bit better.

**Again I want to thank everyone who has read this story and/or favorited, followed, and reviewed the Chapters. Without you all I wouldn't be doing this. So thanks, Tormount, Trix17, RGM-96S, emma, Icesquall, and Annnooonnn for your reviews. And specifically, I want to thank Tormount and Annnooonnn for leaving detailed analysis' of my last chapter. In later chapters I might start to respond to these in the Author notes but... Its still a bit early in the story to do that. **

Revised note: ODST Sergeant Schmitt, due to popular demand is now ODST Captain Schmitt.

So, without further **adieu,**

****Chapter 2: A Ghost Town****

* * *

><p>Unknown Planet<p>

Crash site of UNSC Civilian Vessel _Mary Celeste_

The area of the crash site was pierced by a deadly silent following the _Mary Celeste's_ ungraceful landing. Not a minute ago, the _Mary Celeste_ had tumbled and slide within a stone's throw of an unknown town, flinging soil, rocks, and metal plating all around before finally coming to a dead stop.

Almost immediately smoke began to billow from the ships now lifeless engines, as small fires flared to life in the wake of the ships' final resting place...

* * *

><p>Within the Mary Celeste, the condition was no better than outside. Most of the crew, save the Spartan, had passing out during the crash. For Captain Schmitt, during this time he was thrown back into a memory from his first days in training.

He was back in basic, running with the men and women that he would eventually call friends... Each face a dark reminder of who he had lost. Some had died during the Siege of Paris IV, others during the massacre of New Jerusalem, but most had died with Reach...

As he looked from one young face to another, flashes of the soldiers' death would force themselves before his eyes. Even those he had not seen die, portrayed their own images of death, disfigurement, and brutality. All the while as the old ODST Cadence permeated his ears. And in the Cadence he could hear the voices of his friends singing the phrase, as well, to his surprise, his own voice...

'Helljumper, helljumper, where you been?'

'Feet first into hell and back again!'

'When I die-'

Captain Schmitt woke with a start, coughing up saliva and blood that had begun to threaten his ability to breathe. He quickly shook the memory of the dead, his dream, out of his head as he began to get his bearings.

The room was dark. No doubt, in the ODST's mind, that during the crash power to the bridge had been cut to prevent any undo damage to the crew. With only the smallest amounts of light finding its way through the now dirt coated window, the Captain could just barely make out Noble Six's armor. From the Spartan's movements and position, Schmitt quickly deduced that he was alive and attempting to reestablish power to the bridge.

This brought the Captain to his next course of action. Finding out if the rest of the crew were still alive and on this side of hell.

"Is..." To his surprise, his mouth had become dry as he began to ask the question. "Is everyone alive still?" _Those memories..._ They had done a number on his conscience. Before the Fall of Reach, a question like this wouldn't have left him, so... off. But now, with Reach was gone, and everyone he knew and loved with it...

These survivors... these survivors, where all that was left of Reach and those he knew and loved. It may have been a knee jerk reaction to his dream, but _they_ were his family now. And unlike what happened to everyone on Reach, he would protect them.

Then he heard the chorus of responses,

"Yes, Sir."

"Alive, Sir."

"Ha.. haha, I'm still alive!"

But, that was it... The Spartan himself had not responded, and if his ears did not deceive him, one of the service women hadn't responded either. That didn't sit well in the Captain's gut. So, he immediately asked the Spartan the question he now dreaded the answer to, "Is something wrong Six?"

In response, the Spartan simply replied, "Lance Corporal Langnar, is dead." A tinge of sadness and anger was not completely hidden in his attempted normal voice.

_How.. unless...unless something happened to her seat. _The Captain didn't respond for a moment and then repeated the words the Spartan had said in disbelief" Corporal Langnar is dead?"

Seemingly, almost as a response, power flooded back to the bridge, as what remained of the bridge's interior lighting sparked back to life. And that's when the Sergeant and the rest of the survivors, outside of Noble Six, saw what had happened to Corporal Langnar.

Her body laid haphazardly on a terminal. From what the Sergeant could see, her helmet, which was designed to withstand large impacts, was dented inward far beyond what the Sergeant knew was required for a death blow. Her head.. was also lying at an awkward angle, in the wrong direction and a small stream of blood was seeped out of the crease in Langnar's helmet. Her body... Schmitt did not want to put to memory, was also, to put it lightly mangled and broken.

"Christ..." Was all he could manage before he turned to visible check the conditions of the other survivors.

Outside of a few additional bruises and cuts, the two marines, insurrectionist, and Spartan looked to be in roughly the same shape as they were before they entered the ship. And that was when the Spartan spoke up, "What are your orders, Sir?"

Such a simple question, but one that forced the Captain into a new realization. He was the highest ranking member of the survivors and would need to lead the rest.

Schmitt blinked as he formulated what needed to be done. Firstly, he needed to know the condition of the ship was, so, he turned to the two Hades Corp engineers. "Corporal Stacker, Private Schultz, I need you two to get down to the engines and make sure this ship is stable. After that, see what you can do to get this ship fully operational again, specifically, see what you can do to get weapons and communications functioning on this ship." With a "Yes, Sir." the two Marines hurried out of the _Mary Celeste's_ bridge to see what needed to be done.

Now, with that taken care of, the Captain turned to the Spartan. "Noble Six, get down to the cargo bay and gear up. You're going to do some recon on the immediate area. See if anything poses an immediate threat, if not, I want you to brief me on the condition of the ship itself. After that, see what you can gather on where we are."

The Spartan then replied to the Captain with a, "Yes, sir," before briskly making his way out of the bridge and to the cargo bay. But

not before he heard the Captain tell Benjamin what their jobs would be.

"As for you and me, we're going to move and properly dispose of these two bodies."

* * *

><p>As the Spartan made his way through the Mary Celeste, he was able to see the extent of the ships damage first hand. Terminals sparked and many lights refused to work. From what he could see, nothing within the ship seemed unfixable, but it would take at least a half a year with the five man crew to get the ship fully operational again, not including what damages where done to the exterior of the vessel.

Quite quickly, after passing the two marines, one of which was working in an engine room, while the other was working on the Slipspace drive in a preemptive strike to prevent it from malfunction and drag everyone back into Slipspace, the Spartan entered the Cargo hold.

Like the rest of the ship, the cargo hold was in disarray. Crates once stacked neatly, now laid jumbled and unorganized. A few crates had even managed to find their way onto the cargo holds' pathways, while at least one of the three warthogs laid on its side on top of a few crates.

Luckily for the Spartan, his spare MJOLNIR armor, the one they had picked up from the farm, hadn't been lost in the sea of crates. After around a minute the Spartan was able to pry off his partially melted shoulder plate and replaced it with an identical one. Followed quickly with Six replaced his worn broken helmet, with the pristine, hardened Pilot helmet that was within the crate.

With his quick replacements done, the Spartan began to search the various stolen cargo of the ships' hold for a SRS 99 Anti-Material Sniper rifle and ammunition for his personal weapons. In the two minutes time that it took him to find the sniper rifle and munitions, Six had gained a taste of the variety of items this group of insurrectionists had stolen.

Outside of preserved food rations, small arms and heavy munitions, the thief's, it appeared, dabbled in stealing medical equipment and military grade prosthetics. But that wasn't it; this group had also managed to have gotten its hands on a suit assembly machine, a thing that was only useful to Spartans...

But the Spartan had to shake the growing questions of, how and why these items had been stolen from his mind. There were more pressing matters at hand, namely the possibility of an indigenous species preparing to attack the occupants of the ship in their weakened state or worse... the Covenant.

After checking to make sure that his active camouflage unite was working, the Spartan readied his assault rifle and cycled the door into the new world.

* * *

><p>It was midday on the planet, as the Spartan tactically moved from the door of the ship to the closest defensible debris mound. To a casual observer, nothing besides the opening of the ship's door and a faint shimmer of light would have been noticeable.<p>

From the Spartan's defensible position he quickly began to scan the landscape for any signs of life. Checking streets, windows, and doors in the direction of the town, and the forest's edge and fields that dominated the rest of the immediate area. When he spotted no immediate threat, he continued to press up the debris field and into the nearest adjacent building to the crash site.

Once inside, his camouflage deactivated, and the Spartan began to check the house. After, he was sure the building was secure, he made his way to the upper level of the building, as he opened up a direct line to the Captain.

"What's the situation outside, Six?"

The Spartan maneuvered to a hole in the house, he scanning the ship, the town, and the forest line again. "It's quite." The Spartan took a moment to look at the town as a whole, "The town we landed next to...It's human. Seems to be a ghost town."

"That's.. interesting. Can you see anything that could explain why it was abandoned?"

The Spartan looked more closely at the buildings, looking for any signs of damage or chaos that might explain the abandonment. Some buildings had collapsed, but it did not appear to have been from natural decay. Other buildings seemed to have had holes punched out of them, such as the one the Spartan was currently using to survey the town.

"It appears like a battle or a riot had taken place in the town... but," the Spartan felt the need to add that "there's no signs of bullet usage, plasma burning, or explosive's damage... whatever did this, it's something I haven't seen before."

The silence that followed that statement, spoke volumes about the curious situation that surrounded the survivors. But eventually, the Captain asked a second question about the mysterious town, "Can you estimate on how long it has been abandoned?"

The Spartan checked the roads of the town and the visible peripherals of the town. "Five maybe Seven years max. Vegetation hasn't moved into the town enough for it be more than that."

"Understood." The Captain then moved on to one of the other pressing matters, that required the Spartans eyes. "How's the condition of the ship look?"

The Spartan again scanned the vessel before returning his sight's to the forest's edge, the only area that still posed a possible threat. "The Ship's missing half a wing, extensive hull damage, engine one is gone, engine four is melted to its wing, engines two and three are dead, undercarriage guns are gone, and upper guns appear to be operable but in need of immediate repairs."

The Spartan could hear the Captain sign. "Dammit," The Spartan

couldn't blame the Captain for this reaction. For, at a _minimum_, the ships' damage indicated that they would be grounded for at least five years, that would be, _if_ they had or could find all of the materials they needed to reconstruct the ship. An unlikely possibility...

The Captain then gave the Spartan a new objective, "Noble Six, see what you can gather on the people who lived in the town. Maybe it can shed some light on where we are, _hell_, maybe we'll get lucky and find out that this is a UNSC colonized planet... Otherwise, we need to figure out what type of war is going on down here, lest we be caught in the middle of it."

The logic to the Captain's orders were sound. If this wasn't a UNSC planet, they'd be at a disadvantage in negotiation with the planets power, thus any information about the people who lived on this planet would be crucial in the inevitable confrontation between them and the indigenous population. For, if their confrontation with the indigenous people's goes south... even _if_, by some stroke of luck they were centuries behind technologically, numbers and time would certainly spell the doom for the survivors of Reach.

"Yes, Sir." And with that, Six began searching house, after house, for any inkling of information about who, what, where, and why the people of this town lived _here_, _in this town and on this planet_, _and why they left.

* * *

><p>After nearly an hour and forty minutes of searching, the Spartan had learned only a few facts about the people who had once called this town home.<p>

Firstly, with the assistance of Dots, Six had learned from several journals and loose papers that he had found throughout the town that hadn't not destroyed by the weather. That the people of the town spoke a derivative of German and, on top of that, the last recorded year for all these documents seemed to be 845. A year that didn't match up with any possible explanation, for humanity had only been colonizing planets for under 500 years... _another curiosity_.

Secondly, several of the journals had made references to military organizations, Survey corps, Garrison, Military Police, and Titans. From what he could read, the Garrison and Military Police seemed to be involved in the security of the town, while the Titans and Survey corps were two warring factions over land expansion. Not much was written about the Titans outside of the fact that they were an external threat. When the Spartan had sent this information to the Captain, the Schmitt deduced that they were probably nothing more than another tribe or nation on this planet. Regardless, from the texts it seemed that the Survey corps were losing the fight against the Titans.

That was all the Spartan was able to collect before he was called back by Captain Schmitt. Now, Noble Six had to be tactical support for the two engineers, Corporal Stacker and Private Schultz, as they repaired the surviving three gun mounts. So, rather quickly the Spartan had made his way to the tallest building in the town, that offered a good vantage point on the ship and the surrounding area

around the town.

At first, things where as uneventful as they had been since the Spartan first exited the ship. In no time, the marines had exited the ship and had finished repairing the first gun. Then during the repairs on the second gun, the Spartan noticed a faint motion at the forests edge. When the Spartan centered his rifle scope on the motion, he was met with the sight of an unnaturally large, seemingly human, nude creature.

The creature stood at five meters tall, had no sign of genitalia, and held an expression of fear and awe as it looked towards the crash site. Had the Spartan not viewed the creature through his sniper rifle, at this distance he would have thought the creature was a young Guta. And, for all it was worth, this creature was showing the intelligence of a Guta out of mating season. For, it just stood there...unmoved, just watching the ship from a distance of nearly a kilometer away.

Immediately, the Spartan opened a channel to the Captain and began to forward his live camera feed. Simple stating, "Sir, you're going to need to see this."

"What is that... is that a giant?" Was the Captain's response to seeing the thing that the Spartan was scoping in on.

"I'm beginning to think that these where the Titans the journals I found earlier were talking about, Sir." Noble Six added as another two 'Titans' approached the clearing next to the first one. These ones as well, stopped exactly one kilometer away from the crash site. In the shade of the forest. Outside of some facial differences and different hair colors they were the same as the first. Even holding the same look of fear and awe as the first Titan...

"Keep an eye on them Six. If they start making hostile motions towards our position, take them down." The Captain Stated before adding "The engineers are down to the last gun. Once they're done and back in the ship, I want you to return back to the ship as well. We'll need to discuss what we're going to do about those things..."

By now, the number of Titans had grown to five, and they still seemed to refuse to get any closer than one kilometer to the crash site. Still, all holding the expression of fear and awe...

And that was when they seemed to smell something, for all at once, they turned and began moving in the direction of the clearing on the reverse side of the town to the ships crash site. Immediately the Spartan tightened his grip on the trigger before adjusted his scope to see what the Titans were after.

At first, all he could see was a dust cloud, but as his scope adjusted, he could make out individuals on horseback...

Humans on horseback.

The group of rides divided into three groups at this time and the giants, no, Titans separated to attack the riders. As the fight quickly evolved before the Spartan's eyes, he witnessed some of the riders jump from their horses only to shoot wires from their waist

gear and latch onto the Titans that attacked them.

The Spartan witnessed two individuals use unique swords to slice at the nape of the neck of one Titan, which seemed to kill it instantly. He then witnessed one rider fail to latch his gear onto a one of two Titans attacking his group and was subsequently torn apart and devoured by the Titans. A flashback to images of _Brutes eating civilian and military personnel_ flashed in the Spartans mind, as his grip on the rifles trigger became dangerously close to firing the weapon. "Sir, permission to engage?"

He watched as another rider was crushed by a larger Titan that had, intentionally or unintentionally, fallen on top of the rider and his horse. The Spartan then noticed another Titan, this one running, exit the forest wall, heading straight toward a group of riders who were completely unaware to its presence.

"Engage at your discursion, Spartan." And with that the Spartan pulled the trigger, with the intention of putting a bullet straight through the base of the running Titans skull, but due to the compounding effects of his fatigue, the Spartans shot missed its mark. Instead of landing squarely in the Titans brainstem, the bullet pierced straight through the nape of the Titans neck.

Regardless of this error, the running Titan fell to the ground dead and the Spartan had revealed his existence the riders. Quickly, Six began looking to see if any of the riders had discovered his exact location. First, Six scoped the group he had just helped save, and noticed that the Brunette in the group was starring directly at him. Defiant amber eyes piercing his direction, before, like the rest of her squad, she quickly rode off to finish the two remaining titans.

The Spartan, now knowing that his location was fully compromised, recognized that the riders had the situation with the Titans under control and quickly made his way down the building and towards a structure adjacent to the crash site.

Now, with his active camouflage unit readied, he would wait and see how the deliberations played out between the riders and his group of Survivors.

* * *

><p>Year 850<p>

Survey Corps, In root to crash site

Approximately four hours into the 56th Expedition

Since the abnormal titans sudden, unexpected death, the mood of the expedition changed dramatically. Before, the groups' mentality to this excursion had been simply been that of a side errand, but now... Now, it was something completely different, wholly unique to anything the Survey Corps, or humanity, had run into since the dawn of the Titans.

Initially, when the now sixteen member group, regrouped after finishing off the last titan, the group had been silent. The weight of knowing that someone unknown was out there, in the town, watching

them, weighed heavily on their minds. But then, under Erwin's orders the group continued into the town and whatever, laid behind it.

As the group entered the towns threshold, everyone was alert for small movements, anything that could give away the position of the unseen individual, who had helped during their fight. Conversations once loudly made, either stopped or where dropped to a whisper, as the group carefully edged their way through the town.

Rumors, quickly began to circulate amongst the lower members of the expedition that 'it' was a ghost, an alien, or a survivor that was unable to escape when Wall Maria fell. All of which sounded ludicrous given what they had seen in the last five years, but now, with this odd silence and feeling... any of those things seemed plausible.

Then, they finally hit the divide that separated the town from whatever had fallen. Initially, everyone was interested to see what had truly fallen, but when they did. They were in for a large surprise.

What laid before them, was, in the only words the Survey members could describe it, a beached metal monstrosity. The thing seemed to have taken the landing badly, since the object was obviously badly damaged, but to the trained eye some of the damage didn't appear to have been caused by the fall...

However, that train of thought quickly was crushed, as the members of the Survey Corps noticed four human shaped individuals with guns ready at the Maw of the object. Looking from one individual to another, these beings were a black suit of armor, two green suits of armor that appeared to be human, and what was most certainly a human male in a variety of green foliage colored clothing.

The members of the Survey corps, stopped dead in their tracks as the weight of a potential confrontation with such an alien group of humans hung over their head. After what could have been minutes of a motionless standoff between these two opposing humanities, Erwin gave Hanji a gesture to attempt communication.

As Hanji dismounted from her horse, and slowly edged her way in front of the rest of the Survey corps members. The tension of what this initial attempt at conversation could lead to, weighed heavily on all the survey corps members... and unbeknownst to them, it weighed just as heavily on the survivors of Reach.

"Hello. My name is Hanji Joe. Nice weather we're having..." She paused, "Do you understand my language?"

****End Chapter****

* * *

><p>That's the end of Chapter 2!

****Next chapters when we're going to see how things work out between these two groups.****

******Again, I want to thank my two friends, DeadzManWalking for helping me out by beta testing this chapter.** ****

****And again, thanks everyone for reading and have a wonderful day!****

******Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed.******

*** * ***

><p>Interesting Note: Its interesting to note that several people in both the Halo-verse and the Shingeki no Kyojin world, enlist in their militaries for similar reasons: career advancement, better standard livings, and seeing more of the world. But their are distinct differences in the general reason to fight. For Halo, it is to slow the advance of Covenant menace, to save lives, and humanity, from a near certain doom at the hands of the Covenant. As for Shingeki no Kyojin soldiers, those ****who ****at least join the Survey Corps, seem to want to see humanity expand beyond it entrapping walls and to rid itself the Titan menace, which for the most part, is not an encroaching enemy.****

****Just something to think about.****

4. Chapter 3: Two Humanities

****Hello, again!****

******I want to thank everyone who has read this story and/or favorited, followed, and reviewed the story so far. Without you all, this wouldn't be happening. Thanks, Tormount, Pannthour, SuperSaiyin4Vegeta, Annnooonnn, Blackburn, Spockify, Demosthenes2211, Duffman3005, and Jetsmillion for reviewing the last chapter.******

*******Annnooonnn: I am up to date on both Shingeki no Kyojin and Shingeki no Kyojin: Before the Fall. I also saw the Subaru commercial, which was interesting.*******

*******SuperSaiyin4Vegeta: Your well worded explanation for NCO's was the only reason I changed the characters rank. As for the armor, its alluded to in the prologue that that was stolen from the Sabre program launch and testing range. For your final point, I never said it was a full set of armor, just spare *****pieces.****

*******Pannthour: I agree with Hanji over Hange.*******

*******Again I thank everyone who reviewed. I apologize for not responding to everyone's review but, I'm still trying to keep the other notes short for now.*******

*******So here it is Chapter 3: Two ****Humanities****

*** * ***

><p>[Unknown Date]2552

Early Afternoon, Unknown Planet

In Confrontation with local human population outside of UNSC Civilian Vessel _Mary Celeste_

Inside Captain Schmitt's Helmet, one minute and forty-two seconds had passed since the riders had entered visible range of the UNSC survivors, and now, one of the riders had dismounted. She began, with arms in a position of harmlessness, to slowly moving her way in front of her fellow horsemen, before stopping a healthy distance away from the survivors. And said in a accented German,

"Hello. My name is Hanji Joe. Nice weather we're having..." She paused, "Do you understand my language?"

The Captain, who upon learning that a confrontation was inevitable, never expected in a million years that _that_ would be the way the deliberations would open up between their two groups. But, at the very least, it did mean that they were just as ill prepared as the Captain was for such a deliberation. The Captain was a foot soldier after all, and unlike Ship captains who would have an inkling of an idea of how to begin negotiations with a new civilization or species, the ODSF Captain only had his experience of dealing with outer colonists and insurrection informants to go off of.

The Captain then responded, without lowering his weapon, "Yes, most of us understand your language." He paused, deciding to ignore the question about the weather, he continued, "Who do you represent, Hanji Joe?"

The woman gasped, and looked visibly taken aback by the fact that they, well at least Schmitt, Benjamin, and the Spartan, even though she didn't know that specifically, understood German. "I... I'm a member of the Survey Corps, and.." she gestured energetically towards the group behind her "We represent all of humanity."

"You have to be _shitting_ me." Schmitt could hear Benjamin whisper in English next to him. "Where the _hell_ did we land?"

Schmitt could only agree with Benjamin. Just where the hell _did_ the _Mary Celeste_ _crash_ land?

Almost immediately his mind quickly sank into jaded thoughts about far-flung science fiction explanations to explain this situation.

_ 'Maybe_ we landed in some alternative dimension bullshit. No, no, no that's too easy, no, we landed in the far-flung future where apes, no, Titan's rule the world. Or, just _maybe_ this is some sort of alien zoo in a _twisted_ version of the Renaissance era with _Giants_... '

Whatever it was, the Captain doubted he'd get any of those answers from these people... and the Dot fragment would be useless to find answers. Even if she was a fully restored, this would be way out of her operation's matrix ability to understand...

If he ever wanted answers on _why_ this was going on, he'd need to get back to UNSC space. Just one more reason to get this ship fixed and off the planet...

That was when the woman, Hanji, asked the four survivors her own questions. "Who are you people, who do you represent and why are you here? And what do you call that thing behind you that you came in on?" Hanji pointed at the Mary Celeste.

The Captain sighed, things could have been worse. "Um..." He stumbled to think of a way to explain to this woman and her company what his group of ragtag survivors were, "We're UNSC personnel." At least most of us are... the Captain stole a side glance at Benjamin. "To be more specific, we're citizens of the Unified Earth Government, which the UNSC is the military branch of..."

Damnit. That was not the way he wanted to put that. He could already here murmurs in their ranks about the reason military men would be sent to their planet. Now they were going to think that his group of survivors was some sort of advanced recon group to take over this planet...

The Captain bite his lip for a moment. There was no easy way to explanation why they were here... and it wasn't like he really had the ability to bluff about the survivors' situation, the condition of the ship was right there. So he just went into it, "Look, I'm not going to screw around with you here. We're in a rough situation..."

"From where we come from, humanity is protected by us, the UNSC, and we, as well as the human race, are being pushed to the verge of extinction by a conglomerate of alien species known as the Covenant. I know you may think you protect all of humanity, but humanity covers far more than just this planet." He paused, gauging the reaction of the other group to this information. Hanji seemed to be eating up these facts, and her blond haired superior, if the ODST had to guess, also seemed accepting of this information. But the rest seemed to be either confused by his confession or downright disbelieving of it.

The Captain begrudgingly continued, "The Covenant that we fight sees the human race as nothing more than a scourge on the galactic stage and want nothing more than to remove any trace of human existence. They even burn planets into glass to expunge all traces of humanity." He motioned with his free hand to the survivors "We ourselves narrowly missed being glassed on one of their most recently found planets." Schmitt refused to go into more detail about the importance of that planet as he continued. "And in our narrow escape, we ended upâ€¦ here."

Now the Captain decided to play his hand on the Survey Corps. "From what we've gathered since we landed on this planet, it looks like you're in a losing war against those giants, I mean Titan's, correct?" He didn't wait for a response, since he had just devised a plan that might get his survivors off of this planet, though, in all likelihood he could probably be court-martialed for this; "I suggest a deal."

He hoped that this other group would accept it; after all, two of their members had been saved by the Captain's survivors already. "You get us supplies to fix our ship, so that we can go back to fighting to save humanity on the galactic scale... and my men and I will work with you and your group against this Titan menace. It's a win-win after all, I mean, we help you save your humanity from those

abominations, and you help us get back to saving our humanity."

If they didn't accept his deal, well, he still had the Spartan and the ship guns as a backup.

* * *

><p>Survey Corp<p>

Outside of Crash-site

For Ervin Smith, the situation before him had shifted rather rapidly. First, his men stumble upon a group of otherworldly humans with weapons at the ready, then they start spitting information about an alien empire attempting to expunge humanity from existence, and now they were offering their own assistance on the Titan's. Of course they wanted compensation for their assistance, but, in many ways this is everything he could have hoped for. The only problem was, where they offering assistance because they were in a bad situation, or were they like some of his men were whispering, just biding their time to attack humanity...

But, Ervin had to think impartially about their offer. Even if they plotted against humanity, they could still be a useful ally against the Titans in the short-run, then, if they posed a large enough threat against humanity within the walls they could and would be dealt with. "You say, you can offer us assistance. What makes you think you would be an asset to us?"

The black armored man turned his attention to Ervin. It was still mildly disconcerting to Ervin that he couldn't see the individual face beneath the helmet and that the man hadn't bothered to formally introduce himself. "As you saw earlier, when one of our men saved two of your soldiers' lives, our weapons are more than capable of killing one of those Titans in a single blow. And unlike your people, we can do the killing from outside of the titans reach, much less casualties if they can't reach you. But that weapon isn't the only tool at our disposal that could decimate those monsters; you've only seen a _taste_ of what we have to offer."

That statement was cryptic, but he did offer at least one reasonable point, they could fight the titans at a greater range than any in the Survey Corps. However, Ervin would still need to know more if he was going to accept this deal. "What type of materials would you need to repair your vessel?" murmurs of discontent could be heard from a few of the Survey Corp members.

"Copper, steel, and titanium, to name a few of the more necessary materials. If you don't have all the types of materials we need... we might be able to work around it. Our engineers are good at what they do. They can make it work."

Ervin again, thought about the deal. Copper and steel were possible to get and give to these people, but Titanium... it might be a bit more of a problem since Ervin had never heard of such a metal. Then again, it might just be a different name for a metal they already used. He'd need to probe the black armored man for more information on this titanium in the future, but for now, it seemed for the most part, that the Survey Corp could hold up their end of the deal if things panned out.

That was when Levi quietly offered his own opinion in the form of a question "Are you sure about taking them up on their offer?"

However, before Ervin could respond to Levi, Oruo in an attempt of bravado moved to pull out his swords, as a sign of aversion to this situation, as he muttered his agreement with Levi over trusting these interlopers.

But, before Levi or Ervin could tell Oruo to sheath his swords, Oruo was violently thrown to the ground and disarmed by a distortion of light that faintly looked like a suit of blue and silver metal. Then, after a moment, the shimmer disappeared as a giant of a man in a heavy looking suit of armor revealed itself restraining Oruo.

Everyone was still, as they took in what they only thought was impossible. That thing had just appeared out of thin air.

Then, the man in the black suit of armor, that seemed to be the leader of the UNSC solders, called out to the large being that was holding down Oruo, "Stand down Lieutenant, I think you made your point."

And with that, the blue giant, the Lieutenant, released Oruo as he stood up and moved towards his UNSC brethren. All the while, the rest of the Survey Corps members, besides Ervin and Hanji, held their hands hesitantly over their blades; ready to unsheathe and strike the giant if need be.

When the Lieutenant reached his UNSC brethren, the black armored individual elaborated about him. "The Lieutenant, here. Is a Spartan. I begrudgingly admit; they are the best of the best where we come from. There's no other soldier you would rather want to fight besides you than a Spartan... And no greater enemy to face than that of a Spartan's wrath. If you doubted our ability to help you before, I doubt you can refute it now."

This didn't sit very well with Ervin. Yes, they proved that they had several tricks up their sleeves that would make them an invaluable asset against the Titans, but at the same time, they proved their ability to compromise the Survey Corps security... That Spartan had managed to slip behind their ranks undetected until he needed to strike at one of his subordinates, what would have stopped him from doing that to an individual of power in the Survey Corps, or if they were brought into the walls a government representative or the king.

But the Spartan hadn't attacked him, nor did he injure Oruo when he made an aggressive move near the Spartans men. All he did was disarm Oruo and return to his rank when called...

"Commander!" A member of Ervin's squad called for his attention. As Ervin turned to see what required his attention he was subsequently redirected by the soldiers hand to look at the sky behind him.

A red flare could be seen in the distance behind the town.

That was not good. Red flares were only used when something went

wrong or could go very wrong, very soon. He needed to get back to the rest of the Survey Corp... But this situation was also extremely pressing. If he didn't forge this alliance now, then it might never happen. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for humanity, but would the potential rewards for working together be enough to outweigh any potential consequences...

It was a gamble either way.

Ervin returned his gaze back to the black armored soldier, who now had his gun resting in a much less aggressive stance. "If we agree to your terms, how long would it take you and your men to be ready for action?"

Without a pause the armored being replied, "We can be combat ready in twenty minutesâ€¦ _if_ our terms are agreed upon." It seemed that a red flare was a universal sign, for Ervin was almost positive the armored being understood the position Ervin now found himself in.

Ervin blinked. He was out of time, and would need to take a blind leap of faith on this one. What could be gained from using these people was _far_ too great to just throw aside out of suspicion. They would need to be watched closely, but the deal would be struck.

"We agree to your terms. We will assist you in gaining the materials necessary to rebuild your vessel in exchange for your service in assisting us to protect humanity against the Titan threat."

"Then we have a deal." The armored individual lowered his weapon even more.

"Yes." Ervin could hear Levi sigh in disagreement to the deal, but there was no real choice. What could be gained was far greater than what could be lost. If things didn't change against the Titans, humanity would be lost regardless. "We will need your men to be readied as quickly as possible, for a threat has arisen." He turned to see the flare still in the sky behind him. "I will be leaving a squad to lead you back to our camp, but the rest of us need to leave now."

The armored individual didn't seem surprised by this statement. "Understood, but..." he fished in a pocket of his armor and took out a silver piece of metal. "Take this," he tossed it at the feet of Ervin's horse, "it a tracking beacon. If we get separated from your men, it will allow us to find you again."

Ervin didn't know what to make of this object, but regardless, as a sign of good faith he passed it to a member of his squad that would be returning to the main Survey Corp group with him and called to Levi. "Levi, your squad will be staying to supervise and escort these UNSC people." He then dropped his voice down to a whisper in hopes of preventing the other group from hearing. "Keep a close eye on the Spartan, and if they appear to be a threat, do what is necessary."

Levi never took his eyes off of the other group, and specifically the Spartan, as he replied "Understood, Commander."

With that Ervin made ready to leave with the rest of the expedition

force save for Levi's squad when Hanji made herself known.

"Ervin, you must allow me to stay. Just think of what I can learn about these people if I can watch them prepare for battle against the Titans!" Ever since that Spartan had made itself know, Hanji had went from quite interested in learning about these UNSC people to itching to pull apart and learn every last detail about them, and specifically that Spartan. She was shaking and practically salivating as she pleaded to Ervin and sporadically stole glances at the giant individual.

Rather than argue with Hanji at a time like this, Ervin agreed that she could stay, but her squad would be leaving with Ervin.

With that taken care of, Ervin and the nine other Survey Corp members left to assist the greater Survey force with whatever issue it found itself in...

As Ervin turned to look upon the crash site one last time before moving out of visual range he noticed something new. Three objects on the crashed vessel seemed to have been orienting themselves to keep Ervin's group in its sights..._Huh, just how many tricks do they have up their sleeves._

* * *

><p>As Noble Six listened to what he had every right to believe where the leaders of the Survey Corps discuss the UNSC personnel and how they were to be put down if they caused trouble. Six couldn't help but feel that this thought was mutual. If they attempted to harm him or anyone else that survived Reach, they would die at his hands. But this brought about another thought. Just, why did this situation go down the way it did.<p>

As Commander Ervin, who's name and rank was exposed thanks to his helmets ability to amplify quite noise from a relatively large area, left with some of his men in the direction of the Red flare. Benjamin turned to the Captain and in English spoke his mind.

"Well, that could have gone a hell of a lot better. Now we're at the mercy of these people..." he paused before continuing, "How do we even know they'll keep up their end of the bargain?"

The Captain, sizing up the remaining Survey Corps members, replied "We don't."

"Great."

"I don't like it anymore then you do, but we don't really have a choice. I mean, it doesn't look like we can negotiate to those Titans, and to be honest, I don't know how long we can last against those things before they either overwhelm us, or more likely, we run out of ammo..." The Captain paused, to take a glance at the people and the Spartan under his command. "This is our best bet to get this ship operational and resources to restock on ammo... Besides, if worst comes to worst, we all know how to kill a man, those Titans on the other hand, they're still somewhat a mystery in that regard."

Benjamin, to the Spartan's trained eye, seemed to have paled ever so

slightly at the Captains last sentence, sighed and conceded to the Captain. "Shit... your right, we really don't have a choice."

"What are your thoughts, Six?" The Captain decided to pull in the thoughts of the only other member of the group who could understand the deliberations with the locals.

"They're just as unhappy about the situation as us. Their leader even made a quite statement that paralleled yours, Sir. If we act out of line," the Spartan set a waypoint on Levi, "that individual has been given right to kill us. They even made a special note of killing me first."

Captain Schmitt let out a soft laugh at that. "Good luck with that. Anything else Lieutenant?"

"We should keep up our guard around them, and, as you already made a point of saying, we shouldn't trust them any more then we had too."

With that, the Captain refocused on the remaining Survey Corps members, their babysitters to say the least. Across most of their faces were looks of distrust, or, as the case of the short black haired man on a horse, a look of absolute boredom. However, that Hanji woman was practically drooling and jumping with joy as she looked at the UNSC weapons, vessel, and Spartan from a distance. She practically had the words 'ONI Scientist' plastered in glowing, bold red lettering across her face. _Note to self, don't let her get anywhere near the ship, gear... or Spartan._

The Captain sighed. "Six, you keep an eye on our guests while I explain our situation to those two." With that the Captain turned to the two marines that didn't understand German and began to explain the agreement with them, as he and the rest of the group moved to the back of the ship and the loading bay.

As the Spartan turned to give his full attention to the Survey Corps members he couldn't help but feel that this day, like so many others in the last few weeks since Reach fell, was going to last far longer than anyone would have ever wanted.

_It wouldn't be a Noble mission if it were easy. _

That voice...It was Carter's voice... Six shook his head ever so slightly, Carter was right then, and he is still right now. A Noble mission would never be an easy mission. Six would have to fortify himself, mind and body, for the next day, week, or year that it took for this mission to be accomplished and the survivors safely brought back home.

****End Chapter****

* * *

><p>That's the end of chapter 3!

****Hope you enjoyed it, since it was the hardest chapter for me to write so far. Next chapter we see how this shaky alliance works pans out between the two groups.****

*****Again, I want to thank my two friends, DeadzManWalking for helping me out by beta testing this chapter.*****

And again, thanks everyone for reading and have a wonderful day!

Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed.

* * *

><p>Interesting Note: Its interesting how both universes use the concept of overcoming individual humanity to save humanity to save humanity at large but how both universes use this concept differently. For *****Shingeki no Kyojin their is an emphasis on forgoing your humanity to save humanity, while in Halo their is a underlying emphasis on the need to be human, if only a little bit. There are several examples of this in Halo's external fiction, and Halo Legends, but this all culminates in Lasky's response to Master Chief at the end of Halo 4. *****Lasky:"You say that like soldiers and humanity are two different things. Soldiers aren't machines. We're just people."**

5. Chapter 4: Preparations for the Unknown

Hello Again!

Lone wolf legendary is back with another chapter for you all!

*****Once again, I want to thank everyone who has read this story and/or favorited, followed, and reviewed the story so far. Without you all, this wouldn't be happening. Thanks, aznxa21, JoshMazii, theunders, SuperSaiyajin4Vegeta, cjlof4, Imc9389, Demosthenes2211, and Spockify for reviewing the last chapter!*****

*****theunders: Thank you! Your comment made my day.*****

*****SuperSaiyajin4Vegeta: I will contact you if I have any future questions but feel free to PM me.*****

*****cjlof4: As in cannon, Six is the only lucky one in the group. As for the rest of your comment, you'll just have to keep reading to find out. ;)*****

*****Demosthenes2211: Thank you for noticing. I was trying my absolute hardest to make the contact sound as relatively realistic as possible, not irrationally trusting or antagonistic. I also agree with you on the info dumps and as for your final question I hope this chapter answers it nicely for you.*****

Spockify: Well, here it is. To be honest, college is taking a lot of time from me that I would be using for writing... So I am sorry for the wait.

*****So here it is Chapter 4: Preparations for the Unknown

* * *

><p>Afternoon, Unknown Planet<p>

UNSC Civilian Vessel _Mary Celeste_

Preparing for departure with local population, referred to as Survey Corps.

"With all due respect Sir, what the hell! There's _no way_ we can be prepared to move out in 20 minutes."

Corporal Stacker, was to say the least, frantic after hearing about Captain Schmitt's agreement with the locals. She even was gesturing frantically at the vessel and the only other Hades Corp engineer as she continued. "Sir, without proper, _correct_, materials there's no way Private Liam and me are going to get this vessel airborne again. Not to mention we're only _two_ people, even _if_ they gave us the right materials, it's going to take the two of us _years_ to get this ship airtight and ready for space."

With patients waning Captain Schmitt held up his hand to quiet Corporal Stacker long enough so that he could speak. "I understand, but this is a move in the right direction. Any materials _they_ can bring us is less time we all have to spend finding and refining the metals for use on the ship."

Schmitt paused for a moment, collecting himself for what he expected would cause another tirade from either Private Liam or Corporal Stacker, "Now, grab whatever engineering gear you deem necessary and prepare for departure. We don't know how long this excursion into their lands is going to be; so be prepared for the long term... Lord knows when the next time we will be back in the _Mary Celeste_." He could hear both Marines were preparing to argue with this order and with that the Captains façade of collectiveness broke. He moved aggressively close to the two marines before spitting out the finality of his orders. "This is _not_ negotiable! You _will_ gather your gear and be ready in 20 minutes! We are not just going to _sit here_ with our _thumbs up_ our collective _asses_ as we wait_ for a _fucking_ rescue vessel to just appear out of the middle of _fucking_ nowhere, while more planets are allowed to fall to the Covenant!"

Schmitt then immediately sobered up when the next sentence crossed his mind. He spoke it softly to the two Marines, "With Reach gone, next to nothing lies between the Covenant and Earth... We may already be too late, to be honest... but we have to keep trying. There may never be a rescue for us... and _that's_ why a fully operational _Mary Celeste_ would be essential for our survival here."

With that, Schmitt took a step back and the two Marines somberly, and quickly, moved to collect their gear and prepare for combat. Schmitt took a deep breath. Everything was moving too quickly. First they were fleeing Reach and now they find themselves trapped on this planet...

He, no, all the survivors needed some rest. They had been up for nearly twenty-five hours straight, from Reach to here. Noble Six had been up for god knows how long before they found him. Not to mention whatever sleep the survivors had gotten during the Fall of Reach was

not what many refer to as quality sleep. Everyone was bound to get sloppy and easily agitated in this condition, but that was no excuse.

Schmitt shook his head once more before moving into the hanger bay himself to help pack up necessary equipment while the Spartan stood sentry at the mouth of the hanger bay to prevent the Survey Corps members from entering the ship.

* * *

><p>Hanji was quick on the heels of the UNSC personnel as they moved towards the back of the metal beast of a vessel. Every second was a new observation about these strange new people. Obviously, not everyone in the survivor's group knew her native tongue, since the black armored being was conversing with two of the solders in green who seemed to have been unable to understand the agreement struck between the Survey Corps and their group.<p>

After a small outburst between the man in black and the two green armored solders, Hanji had learned something potentially useful against these new individuals. _This group seems to be suffering instability... more than likely due to their current situation._

Following that, the UNSC personnel entered the maw of the vessel and began to collect and fill, what she could only describe as, a metal carriage with a weapon attached to it. As Hanji moved to enter the vessel with Levi's squad she was almost immediately stopped by the man, or she at least assumed it was a man, who had disarmed Oruo only minutes earlier.

"That's close enough." He stated with a weapon resting in the nook of his arm. Hanji almost asked what he was talking about, but she knew better. They didn't trust her or the Survey Corps, and she would have to tread carefully if she wanted to befriend them and learn all their secretsâ€¦ _and_ weaknesses.

"Sorry." Hanji apologized convincingly as she, and the others, took several steps back. Upon moving to a safe distance she began to furiously record everything and anything she could see, think, understand, observe, or undermine about these new people.

Originally, Hanji had planned to start recording everything she could see in the interior of the vessel but that thought was obscured as she fully took in the large metal man before her. His pristine, faceless visor reflected a clear image of Hanji and the other members of the Survey Corps before him.

His armor, on the other hand, stood in complete contrast to his helmet, was covered in soil, dust, and a verity of blood, which appeared to be both his and others. There were also dried blue, purple, and orange liquids on his armor, but that was almost ignorable compared to everything else about this individual. His armor was dented and chipped in more places than she could possible count. In several spots, where the armor or its undersuit had been melted, burned, or cut through, streams of dried blood could clearly be traced back to the undermined areas in his armor. With each observation about this man, Hanji only had a growing list of

questions to ask him.

Hanji recorded everything about the Lieutenant, she couldn't help but wonder how he was still able to function to the level that he currently was. From all she could gather from the damages and blood loss on his armor, he should have been bed ridden if not on Death's doorstep. Yet, here he was, disarming a Survey Corps member and now preparing for direct confrontation with the Titans... either this man had insane fortitude or he wasn't quite as human as he appeared...

After several more minutes of recording everything she could gather on the Spartan, Hanji refocused on the hanger bay and the work the soldiers within the ship were doing. By now, the first metal vehicle was filled with gear and the UNSC soldiers seemed to have been discussing what to do about another one of these wheeled vehicles that was flipped and partially perched on several large crates. After about twenty seconds of discussion in their native tongue, one of the soldiers in green armor and the man in green camouflage moved to either side of the Spartan, seemingly to take his place, as the Spartan turned around to assist with righting the vehicle.

At first, Hanji watched curiously, wondering what exactly the metal man was going to do, since the vehicle looked far too heavy for any one individual to move. Yet, within a course of under a minute the Spartan had positioned himself underneath the vehicle, picked it up by himself, and maneuvered it to be level with the ground, before finally flipping the vehicle right side up.

This whole action left Hanji and majority of Levi's squad slack jawed at what they had just witnessed. One individual had done what they could only assumed would have required at least four strong men to do in a fraction of the time it would have taken that team to have done it. Yet, none of the UNSC personnel seemed surprised in the slightest at the Spartans ability, for as soon as the Spartan took up his post at the entrance between the Survey Corps and the ship's interior, the other two soldiers standing guard went back to work, without even breaking stride upon seeing what the Spartan had done.

_What is he? _Hanji was left pondering once again, before refocusing on recording everything the group of survivors did to prepare for their journey into Titan territory...

From what Hanji could tell, many of the items being loaded into the vehicles were metal containers of various sizes with strange markings coving their sides, presumable words associated with the other language the group spoke. Some of the smaller containers, Hanji did note, held an emblem of a red cross on a white background which stood out next to other containers the UNSC members had placed in the vehicle, she surmised that these objects must hold some greater importance than their size lead on.

It was at this time the soldier in green camouflage colored clothing noticed that Oruo and Petra were still staring intently at the Spartan. Oruo, most likely, because he had been mildly humiliated by the metal man and also because that event scared Oruo to his very bone. That a man the size of the Spartan could simply sneak up on him, and come that close to killing him, without him even standing a chance.

Petra on the other hand, seemed to be trying to peel away the helmet with her stare, trying to see who this man really was. No doubt in Hanji's mind that Petra, like herself, had realized that he was the man that killed the abnormal Titan that would have killed her and Oruo. Well, that or she was locking on to some of the weak points on the Spartans armor so that she could kill the Spartan quickly if need be and get some praise from Levi. Either way seemed just as likely a reason for her to stare intently at the Spartan.

The green camouflage colored soldier grew a smug smile on his face before yelling to Oruo and Petra "Hey! The Spartans a classy _man_, you're not going to get in his armor, by simply staring at him. You're going to need _woo_ him with a nice dinner first." To top it off the man throw in a wink and a snicker at the end of his little 'joke', having embarrassed Petra and thoroughly pissing off Oruo in the process.

Almost immediately, that mans fun came to an end as both the Spartan and the Captain turned to face the joker. His face became deadly serious after realizing that no one found his joke funny in the group and that he might have angered the Spartan in the process. Before he could say anything possible in an attempt to apologize, the soldier in black called him in a controlled yet angry voice, "Benjamin, _get back_ to work."

Benjamin. That reminded Hanji of a fact that everyone had overlooked during the ever-changing dialogue between the two groups, the two groups had never finished exchanging introductions.

"Umm..." Hanji waved and struggled to get the attention of the black armored soldier, "What's your name?" she finally got out when he turned see what she wanted.

The soldier responded almost automatically to the request, "Captain Ian Schmitt of the 10th Shock Trooper Battalion, Bullfrog squad." he then paused coming to the same realization as Hanji, "We never did introduce ourselves did we..." He then began to point to each individual survivor and introduce them in turn, the two soldiers in green were apparently Marines from a company called Hades Corp of engineers and the green camouflage man was not truly a soldier but a survivor of Reach whose name was Benjamin Galik. The Captain made a point to say that Benjamin's earlier outburst did not reflect any opinion of the UNSC but was that man's personal, not quite correct, attempt at lightening up the mood between the two groups.

After that, Hanji reciprocated the favor by formally introducing all of the currently visible members of the Survey Corps as well as the key players who had left to check on the situation of the main group of Survey members. Namely Commander Ervin Smith, and upon finishing these introductions the group of UNSC personnel seemed ready to leave their downed flying vessel.

* * *

><p>Only a few more things left to do, Captain Schmitt thought as he began to check the two warthogs, making sure all the equipment was secured and wouldn't come loose during their journey into the unknown on this planet. After that he called to Dot.

"Dot, can you lock down the ship?"

"Negative Captain. All automated doors can be locked and sealed upon your exit but, several hull breaches do exist throughout the ship that would allow for partial intrusion."

"What rooms are breached Dot."

"The cafeteria area, custodial room, rear restroom, and observation room all contain large hull breaches."

Schmitt thought on this for a moment, "Corporal Schultz, Benjamin go to the rooms Dot has designated as breached and move all valuable items from the room." He then refocused on Dot as the two survivors entered the bowels of the ship. "Dot, if any of those Titans gets within seven hundred meters of the ship, you are to neutralize them. Is that understood?"

"Yes, Captain Schmitt."

"Alright... if they are indigenous people like the Survey Corps outside, you are to give them a warning not to approach the vessel... in German. If they continue to approach, continue to warn them to leave or else be fired upon and fire a warning shot at four hundred meters. If they persist, lethal force is authorized at three hundred meters."

"Understood, Captain Schmitt."

_Right... that's everything. _Schmitt checked his HUD clock, twenty-one minutes and counting. All he had left to do was to wait for Benjamin and Schultz to return and the group would be ready to join this planet's war... _Hurray..._ Schmitt thought in the most sarcastic voice possible.

But Schmitt needed to stay focused, and out of these cynical thoughts, so he began to recheck the warthogs once more. It was going to be one hell of a fit for anyone sitting in the side seat of the first warthog, since boxes were stacked in such a way to offer a nice tight fit for the occupant of that seat. Though, whoever it was who was going to be sitting in the side seat didn't have any option over what warthog he'd be in since the second warthog's side seat was completely packed with gear, from foot frame to overhead support beam.

Even the back of the warthogs had gear latched onto it, though it was done in such a way as to not hamper the ability of the chain gun operator... That was when Schmitt's eyes fell upon a familiar object on the ground next to the warthog.

A jetpack.

Schmitt having registered what the object was, walked over to it and inspected it. It was a bit scuffed from the crash-landing but it was in working order. He then checked the fuel reserves and noted that it had a full tank. For a moment, he thought about exchanging his current jetpack for the one he just picked up, but then, upon looking at the Spartan and remembering his actions on Reach he changed his mind.

"Six," Schmitt called to grab the attention of the Spartan, "take

this." And as he said that he passed the jetpack to him before adding. "For all its worth you're still an honorary Bullfrog... And for my old squad, I want to see you hopping." He added a forced smile at the end for emphasis his old squad's old joke.

The Spartan only nodded and promptly put on the jetpack as he gave a simple "Thank you" to the Captain.

Turning around once more, to take in the hanger bay, Captain Schmitt noticed that Benjamin and Schultz had returned. Schmitt took in a deep breath and nodded to himself, _it's time to go._

"Alright everyone, let's get this show on the road." He turned to Corporal Stacker and Private Liam, "You two are going to take the second warthog." He then turned to Benjamin and the Spartan "Six you take the gun," a smile crept on the Captains face "and Benjamin your sitting shotgun."

Benjamin looked like he was about to protest but then looked at the Spartan and realized it was in his best interest to suck it up, so he quietly forced his way into the side seat.

After that, the Captain and the rest the UNSC soldiers piled into their warthogs and just as the hanger bay doors shut behind them Schmitt turned to Hanji and yelled, "We're ready to move when you are."

And with that their venture to the Survey Corps field HQ began.

* * *

><p>The trip to the Survey Corps field HQ was quite... too quiet for the survivors of Reach. Paranoia was slowly creeping into all of the survivors at the lack of any wildlife being present, even though the land was alive and green. Some birds were seen earlier on, but nothing else. To the survivors of Reach this was beginning to feel like a trap, although, Hanji's group was leading them in the direction of the tracker that the Captain gave Ervin earlier that day...<p>

The situation wasn't improved by the lack of conversation going on between the groups. Hanji, who at first was all too eager to question the survivors had become quiet after a small argument with Levi, and now seemed content with recording all she could see and interpret about the group as they moved forward.

Then, finally, the convoy could see the peaks of the Survey Corps HQ and the survivors' paranoia declined ever so slightly.

As the group approached, Noble Six could make out the fact that the Survey Corps members were working double time to disassemble their makeshift HQ. Service men and woman were stacking crates into carts, disassembling tents, and corralling horse to prepare to move out. Something had happened, Six surmised, which seemed to required the complete redeployment of this group's whole company, immediately.

Something that reminded him ever so slightly of what happed when Winter Contingency was initiated on Reach...

When the convoy finally reached the outskirts of the camp, Ervin had already rushed over to meet them.

He didn't waste time with formalities as he dove right into the heart of the issue at hand. "Titans are moving in force from all directions towards Trost." Ervin made eye contact with Levi, "I fear the district is in danger. Wall Rose, it seems, may have already fallen." He paused, "That is why I am ordering your squad to advance back to the district immediately to assist in the defense of the town. And, if need be, help in the evacuation of the civilians if the wall has already fallen."

Before Levi could order his men to head headlong back to Trost, Ervin added, "Levi! Our new allies are to join your squad in assisting Trost." Ervin could see Levi about to question his order, so he answered the question before it was asked. "They are already prepared for battle, and they could be instrumental in saving the town. They say their willing to help, this is their proving grounds. Now Go!"

It wasn't Ervin's ideal situation for testing the UNSC personnel's loyalty, but their help was needed. It would be at least another fifteen minutes for the HQ to be disassembled and for all squads to report back in to redeployment to Trost and that was time Trost didn't have. These new people will need to prove themselves now and like this.

And with that, Levi ordered his men to move to Trost and with an acknowledging nod from Captain Schmitt who seemed to have gotten a similar feeling to Noble Six over the condition of the Survey Corps camp. Then, quite quickly the two warthogs and a squad of Survey Corps members began moving at best speed towards Trost and whatever trouble the district found itself in...

****END CHAPTER****

* * *

><p>That's the end of chapter 4!

****Hope you enjoyed it, and again I am sorry for the wait... until the semesters over, chapters might take this long to write.****

*******Again, I want to thank my two friends, DeadzManWalking for helping me out by beta testing this chapter.*******

****And again, thanks everyone for reading and have a wonderful day!****

****Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed.****

6. Chapter 5: On the Precipice of Trost

****Hey guys and gals, lone wolf legendary's back and still alive!****

****I want to apologies for the long wait. A lot has happened since I**

last posted: job, commencement, painting, summer class, and much more. Not to mention the English dub of Shingeki no Kyojin has begun airing in the United States. I've also lost contact with one of my beta readers, so I have an opening if anyone is interested and knows Shingeki no Kyojin well. Also, big shout out to,** **DeadzManWalking for his continued effort at as my only beta reader and for revising my story even though he has yet to actually watch the anime or read the manga.**

Again, I would like to thank anyone and everyone who has taken time out of their day to read this story, favorited it, Review it, Follow it, or as one person had done added it to their community. I would like to thank: Imc9389, SpartanDog1, SuperSaiyin4Vegeta, YourOfficalEditor, cjlof4, Demosthenes2211, Guestie, forthetimebeing, rancorlover, Feathered Budgie, Anon8792, Tuan07, Schniedragon88 for your reviews. Thank you!

Imc9389 and YourOfficalEditor: While I'd like to make the chapters longer, it would make the wait time between chapters that much longer, and now that I'm working I have even less free time to write... I guess we'll see what happens down the line.

SpartanDog1: Ha! I actually enjoyed your rant. It reminds me of the conversations some of my friends would have.

cjlof4: *Smiles knowingly*

**rancorlover: I offer answer. I'm sorry rancorlover, but I think you can understand why I cannot give you an answer. **

Feathered Budgie: Challenge accepted! As I've stated before I DO plan on finishing what I started.

Anon8792: Your not the only one who ended up likes characters who end up dying... Cortana, Miranda , Johnson and Noble team.

Schniedragon88: Thanks, to be honest, if you want to help out with polishing the story I've got an opening for another Beta reader.

Now that that's all over, here's the next chapter!

Chapter 5: On the Precipice of Trost

* * *

><p>[Unknown Date]2552

Unknown Planet

En Route to Trost District

After moving through the Survey Corps's forward operation post, Captain Schmitt couldn't help but wonder if he had made the right choice for his group of survivors... For theseâ€| peopleâ€| seemed exceedingly suspicious of the UNSC outsiders.

He could see it everywhere he looked in their FOB; many of the Survey

Corps members stole glances at the UNSC survivors passing vehicles, while others defiantly stared at the group as they worked to deconstruct the base. Captain Schmitt had even heard several whispered notions of where and why their group of Survivors had come to aid humanity, as they put it, during this time of tribulation. Some of which, if the Captain was hearing correctly, were even insinuating that the survivors had something to do with the mess that was befalling the Trost district at that very moment...

Schmitt mentally sighed. Given everything he had already seen so far on this planet, he was mentally straining to figure out which was going to be the bigger fight to come: fighting the giants on this planet, or keeping this truce with the planet's human population. For if, _this,_ was the level of distrust in their military, the survivors' first allies, he could only imagine the amount of distrust the general population or its internal police force will have towards these outsiders...

But then again, the latter issue was all the more reason for the survivors to perform ferociously in this district's fight. If the survivors could make themselves paramount to the city's defense, then it would only work to their favor in placating civilian fears about the outsiders' arrival or, at the very least, make the UNSC survivors worth keeping around... for the time being.

The Captain exhaled. The more he thought about it, the more he realized the survivors needed more information about Trost and these "Titans." And when the small convoy finally exited the Survey Corps camp and moved to a comfortably quick pace of 35 kilometers per hour, Schmitt saw his window of opportunity.

* * *

><p>For Petra Ral, this day was turning into a never ending event. First, the sky opens up and these new outsiders fall into their hands with their metal man, who seemingly saved both her and Oruo's lives against an abnormal Titan only to show up an hour later and nearly kill Oruo during their groups' standoff; to this new issue in Trost which threatened to turn this peculiar day from just a strange dream, into a nightmare. Then again, as she looked around she noticed that she wasn't the only one thinking this was one hell of a day. Everyone in the squad held a look that said this day was already one to rememberâ€|<p>

But then there was Levi, positioned at the front of the formation charging back to Trost. Like always, he sported his signature neutral expression, like a shield, to ward off anyone but himself from seeing what was on his mind and beneath the surfaceâ€| _Always that cold, unmoving expression_

But her thoughts were interrupted as the metal carriage carrying the outsiders' leader, civilian, andâ€| Spartan revved forward and around her before quickly positioning itself to the right of Levi. Almost immediately, Petra's instinct was to charge forward and protect Levi from what she assumed was going to be an attack by the outsiders, but before she could act, she heard the outsiders' leader speak up.

"So, seeing as how we are about to go into your territory to help your people out. Do you think you can fill us in on some details about this world?"

Levi cast a hidden glance at the black armored man who called himself Captain Schmitt before responding casually, "What do you need to know?"

"This Trost district, what can you tell us about it? Terrain, vantage points, layoutâ€¦ anything that could be useful for us to know in order to maximize our potency in the city." After a short pause he added, "Also, are there any weak points, known targets, or strategy these Titans might use to get upper hand in taking the city?"

Petra could hear Ouro scoff at the very concept of the Titans using strategy to take over the city, something that the Spartan must have also heard. Six turned, with weapon in hand, from his perched position to stare in Ouro's direction before continuing to sweep the area for threats. An act which quickly quieted Ouro.

"Trost is a small district that protrudes from the southernmost part of Wall Rose. A single fifty meter tall wall divides the city from this area, while it's forth side, to the north, is composed of Wall Rose itself." Levi paused momentarily to recollect the district's layout. "The district is mostly composed of three to six-story residential and commercial buildings, but also contains several bell towers that might be useful for your skilled gunmen to offer overwatchâ€¦ Otherwise, most of the district's streets should also be wide enough to allow your vehicles to pass through with little resistance."

"As for the Titans' strategyâ€¦ Only two titans have shown any level of intelligence and both of which will be attempting to breach the inner wall of the city if they haven't already. One we called the Colossal Titan and stands at a height of Sixty meters tall, while the other is referred to as the Armored Titan and is covered from head to toe in armor plating. The rest are mindless and will attack anything human _on sight_."

Captain Schmitt then rephrased the answer for clarity, "So, the two abnormal titans are the only ones we should be worried about strategizing and the rest can easily be lead astray with little more than human bait?"

Petra didn't exactly like the way this man discussed using human life as 'bait' so casually and was equally off put by Levis response.

"That would be correct."

"Alright. Do you have any rules of engagement for my men before I relay instructions to them?"

"Yes, if a member of the Survey Corps or Garrison tells you to do something. Then _do it_. Otherwise, do your best to stem the tide of Titan's into the city. And please... try not to die."

Levi seemd so muchâ€¦ colder when he's talking to these people, Petra noted quietly to herself as the armored man relayed the instructions to his men in the foreign tongue they used.

* * *

><p>"â€|So that's the situation." Schmitt finished. "As for when we get in the city, Six, I want you to find a good vantage point and start scanning for targets. I want you ready to send rounds down range and put these big boys in the ground whenever you can. Benjamin and I, as well as, Corporal Stacker and Private Schultz will be running skirmishes to lure the big shits into your field of fire. Which means," Schmitt turned to Benjamin "when we're in the city, you're going to be manning the gun."

Benjamin's complexion became ghostly white as he began to stumble out an excuse to explain why he shouldn't man the warthog's gun, but he never had the chance to fully vocalize it. Almost immediately after he began to speak, Six cut him off.

"Contact, one o'clock!"

Everyone within the group of UNSC survivors spun to the location the Spartan had designated as a threat.

At first, no one within the group of survivors could see the Titan, for it was at a range only a Spartan could make out. This caused Levi's second in command Eld Jinnto to question what the UNSC personal were doing, "What are you all looking at?"

"Ten meter tall Titan, six kilometers out; bearing: one o'clock." The Spartan responded.

Jinnto found himself skeptical about this answer as he stared off in the direction the Spartan had stated. "I don't see any Titans."

But the Spartan, in Junnto's mind, either didn't hear him or, more likely, just didn't find it necessary to respond to this comment. He just stood there, weapon in hand, waiting for _this_ Titan to approach...

All of which, unsettled Junnto and the rest of Levi's squad even more so, when the Titans silhouette became apparent minutes later...

* * *

><p>What is this Spartan, Hanji continued to wonder as the two warthogs, Levi's squad and herself continued to press towards Trost and the distant single Titan.

_His eyesight must be quite attuned to see objects at such a distance... Hanji continued to think, _but is he really human. _Images of the Spartans blood stained and physically damaged armor, display's of strength in flipping one of the warthogs, reflexes in disarming Ouro, and now acute vision played across her mind. _These are abilities that no mere man, no matter how well trained and able bodied should be able to accomplish by themselves..._

_Hmm... _She continued to ponder the possibilities _What if it's the armor gives him the ability to do such feats? It would explain why none of the others could do what he did... But this mysterious armor ability wouldn't explain why he's even conscious in his current state..._

Images of the Spartans blood, both wet and drying, as it seeped out of damaged and scorched sections of his armor crossed her mind. _Just

who and what is inside that armor... I **need** to find more information about this Spartan... _

And with that, she tilted her head ever so slightly looking in the direction of the Spartan, as to cause her glasses to catch the light of the midday sun in such a way, as to make only one eye visible. This caused her to look like a hungry animal, just salivating at the opportunity to sink her teeth into the object of her desire, _knowledge_.

Knowledge of the Spartan.

* * *

><p>After several more minutes of driving the moment had finally arrived where the ten meter tall Titan noticed the convoy of troops and began moving to intercept and devour them.<p>

When the Titan finally entered weapon range, both Private Schultz and Noble Six wasted no time in dispatching the Titan with 12.7 x 99mm high explosive rounds of the M41 light machine gun equipped on both warthogs chassis'. Resulting in the Titan's head and chest exploded into clouds of red mist. Entire sections of the beast were ripped off, craters formed as tiny comets bombarded the soft target.

And after several seconds of continuous fire, the two gunners spun down their weapons as the Titan, now steaming from all of its gaping holes, fell down dead... or so they originally believed.

"What the fuck!" Noble Six heard Benjamin curse less a minute later as the once smoking corpse of a Titan stood up again.

This momentary panic among some of the less experienced UNSC survivors didn't seem to go unnoticed for the young woman, Petra, if the Spartan was remembering correctly yelled a word of advice to the gunners. "You have to destroy the nap of the neck! It's the only way to kill it! Otherwise, the Titan will just regenerate from whatever damage you have inflicted onto it!"

Testing the woman's advice. The Spartan let loose a short burst of rounds into the Titans neck, and sure enough, after only a dozen rounds the Titan fell again, but this time did not get back up. Instead, its whole body began to steam and smoke as it deteriorated rapidly before the group's very eyes. By the time the group passed the Titan's corpse, it was nothing more than a pile of bones. A ghostly silence fell among the survivors of Reach, for they had never witnessed something organic disintegrate so quickly before their eyes...

* * *

><p>Yet, it reminded them so much of the horrors of Reach...
Glassing deaths as they were called. Where human beings, in the mist of fighting or fleeing from the Covenant onslaughts, were caught up in the middle of glassing runs. When men, women, and children were, in an instant, stripped of all their flesh as the heat of plasma burned it all off their very bones. Their bones themselves where turned into a glass-like substance before they even hit the ground and subsequently shattered...

* * *

><p>But as the group eclipsed a large hill, these ghostly thoughts were reluctantly lost, as the more pressing matter of a besieged Trost District drew their attention.<p>

Even from their great distance, it was evident that smoke was billowing out from the settlement nestled between the walls. And it appeared to the trained eyes of the UNSC personnel that the defending garrison had valiantly attempted to hold the gate, for blood spatters and relic's of defiant last stands were visible in the distance. Even as they watched, the survivors of Reach noted a red flare spiral out over the wall, signaling in their minds that the situation, ever dyer, was not yet lost. For they knew, as the Spartan in their party was evident, that just a few willing souls were sometimes enough to turn the tide of a lost battle.

Now, all that separated the elite relief force from Trost was a few Kilometers of open ground and a steadily thickening force of Titans...

"Captain Schmitt!" Schmitt was taken aback by the sudden vocalization from, the all too stoically quite, Captain Levi, "We're going to make a break for the city's gate. Do not be distracted by the Titans between here and there... They may get in our way, but our goal is not to stay outside of the city's walls. Our goal is to get into the city and defend those left within, as well as, preventing the inner Wall, Wall Rose from being breached." Levi paused, still not taking his eyes off of the ravaged city before him and the red flare in the distance "Is that understood, Captain Schmitt?"

"I understand Captain Livi. The defense of the citizens within the city proper, as well as the inner wall is the primary objective."

"Good. Now let's go!"

And with that Levi pushed his horse to a full gallop with his squad, Hanji and the UNSC survivors close on his heels. And as they rushed towards the walls of Trost, Captain Levi could hear the unmistakable sounds of the UNSC's machine guns barking to life once more as the lumbering hordes of Titans at the doorstep of Trost took notice of the group's presence.

* * *

><p>-Several minutes later within Trost District

****I must close the breach!****

Eren cemented his focus on that lone, pressing objective as he painstakingly pressed forward toward the hole in Trost district's outer wall. The single hole which was allowing all of the Titans to enter...

So many lives had been lost in the past hour alone, in hopes that Eren could accomplish that singular goal, and he wasn't about to let any more lives to be lost at the hands of these monsters... He was going to make their sacrifice mean something.

Eren had already, through his own arrogance and impulsiveness, lead four of his comrades, his friends, to their _meaningless_ deaths at the hands of the Titans... He was weak, _he was_ _powerless_, to do anything about it...

**Thomas****. **_**Mylius**_**... **_**Nac**_**...
Mina****...**

I'll **_make **_**them**_** pay for your
deaths****!**

Even funneling all of his emotions of their deaths, into his burning rage, his hate for the Titans and everything they stood for, a part of him already knew he was going to have to carry the weight of their deaths. Knowing it was his impulsiveness, his indiscretion, that led them to their slaughter... He wasn't going to make the same mistake twice. He wasn't going to let any more die without purpose.

Eren let out a roar of pure intensity as he doubled his effort to close the breach in his Titan form.

**I WILL close the breach!**

But the bolder Eren was carrying on his shoulders was proving to be too heavy for his Titan form to handle, but he wasn't going to allow himself to fail. Too many lost lives demanded this mission to be successful , and even as Eren thought and struggled onwards, he saw the Elite groups of Trost's garrison abandon their relatively safe rooftops to distract the Titans in the area from Eren's paramount mission. Their strategy of running in the streets was equivalent to suicide, but it would draw the attention of the Titans away from Eren and that seemed to be all that mattered to the soldiers.

And in that moment Eren realized something profound. That everyone was born free. These service men and woman volunteering themselves to death proved that every man, woman, and child was free at their core. Even if the world was a cruel place and attempted to crush your hopes and dreams whenever it could, you were free... You were free as long as you were willing to fight for it.

Fight...

**Fight****!**

And as Eren chanted this word to fight he stared at three seven meter tall Titans that now separated him from the maw of the wall breach. And then...

It Happened.

Hundreds of bullets from, what couldn't have come from flintlock rifles, spewed forth from outside the wall breach and into the upper torso and head of one two of the three seven meter tall Titans... killing them near instantaneously.

As the two Titans fell, time seemed to freeze for everyone who saw what had just happened. Even the surviving Titans seemed to stop their attack for a moment as this new event unfolded in front of everyone and everything.

Everyone heard the sound. The sounds that could only be described as a hundred angry horses speaking in two voice...

Two green streaks of metal flew through the debris in the wall breach before unloading another hail of bullets into the third Titan near the hole in the wall.

And with that, time resumed as the Titans once again began to attack on anything human in their vicinity while also taking special note of the newcomers...

Eren watched, still moving forward, step by step, towards the hole these newcomers had just entered from. He noted an armored being drop down from one of the metal carriage's gun emplacement as a human, a man, who was sitting in the front of the carriage scurried to take the armored being's place at the gun. Once the man had taken the gun, the carriage was back in motion and dancing around Titans in the area as it once again spewed forth more bullets.

And now, as Eren took special notice of the armored being in the middle of the street he watched on, as it quickly ran towards the buildings opposite the hole in Trost's outer wall before leaping some distance away from the building and...

Eren didn't exactly understand how it happened, but it appeared that the beings back started on fire as the armored being was propelled forward and upwards toward the steeple of the nearest tallest building in the area. And upon landing the armored being's back, seemed to just.. stop burning as it aimed a large rifle at a nearby Titan and with a single **'Crack'** that resonated around the area like the thunder of a distant lightning strike. The Titan fell face forward smoldering dead, with a fist sized hole through its neck and a trail of bullet debris trailing deep into a building behind the Titan.

Eren's eyes widened. He never witnessed a weapon so powerful that could be operated by one man on foot, but this shock then turned to fear as he noticed the armored being was now turning its large weapon on Eren himself and seemed to be preparing to fire...

****END CHAPTER****

* * *

><p>Cliffhanger's! Now the story's kicking into high gear as the Battle of Trost reaches its Peak! Find out what will happen next in the next installment of 'The Fall'.

****Hope you all enjoyed the chapter. Now that everything's settling down a bit, hopefully I can turn out another chapter sooner.****

****Again, I want to thank my friend **DeadzManWalking for Beta reading my story.******

****And to all of you who have read this chapter, I thank you for your time and hope you all have a good day/night depending on when your reading this.****

****Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed. In many ways they help fuel my writing.****

****Also, I have a poll up on my page. It's going to be an ongoing thing (once I get ten results I'll mark it open so you all can see how the poll is stacking up) but basically I listed some of the more memorable characters in the story who may die canonically or not, as well as, my own characters. And I give you the option to possibly change who I plan on killing. I will admit some of the choices are traps, since the people die regardless (Operative foresight) and others I might be set on keeping alive. Overall, anyone on the list is far game for me *evil smile* so take it as an opportunity to save someone you want to see more of and alive. Also, if you are iffy with me even bringing this up as an option, view it this way. I know several points in upcoming chapters both near and far down the line that require a blood sacrifice (in a sort of speak) and this poll might just sway me on which one to sacrifice.****

7. Chapter 6: Proving Their Worth

****Hello again! Lone wolf legendary with another chapter coming your way!****

****Again, I will start the way I usually do. Thank you, everyone who has **taken time out of their day to read this story, favorited it, Review it and or follow it. I would like to thank: SuperSaiyin4Vegeta, YourOfficalEditor, Hunter092, Blank-Slate, Imperial-Priest Engelbart, HailToTheMadKing, Guest 1 and 2, Krulla Chief, and BLacKxBUrN for your reviews. Thank you!******

****SuperSaiyin4Vegeta****: Thank you. Hopefully, this chapter clarifies your one concern.****

****YourOfficalEditor****: Hopefully I didn't keep you waiting too long.****

****Blank-Slate**** and Imperial-Priest Engelbart: Thank you both!****

****HailToTheMadKing: Thank you, and I am most definitely going to keep this story alive!****

****Krulla Chief****: That's quite the compliment! Now you've put some pressure on me to keep this story up to that standard.****

****BLacKxBUrN****: Thank you for the compliment!****

****Now that that's out of the way, here's the next Chapter!

****Chapter 6: Proving Their Worth****

*** * ***

><p>Trost<p>

Sometime earlier in the Battle...

She ran.

Her mind was now set on the task at hand. To protect Eren, to protect _her_ family... A task she would have done regardless of orders.

As she ran, she heard Eren roar with intensity as he began lifting the bolder, the bolder he was tasked with, to plug Trost's gate.

Ever since Armin had brought back Eren to his senses, Mikasa had been focused on protecting him... leaping from rooftop to street way, taking down the Titans that threatened Eren, or happened to find themselves in his path.

Even now, upon seeing several Titans in the distance near Trost's gate, she prepared herself to fight on Eren's behalf, but...

She heard a distant noise, a noise unlike anything she'd ever heard before. With Armin close on her heels, she slowed to a stop as she attempted to locate the source.

"Any idea what that noise is, Armin?"

"No, none." he replied as he strained to identify the noise. " It doesn't sound like a Titan. In fact..." He interrupted himself as distant gunshots rumbled through the city. "Gunfire? Why would someone be using those now?.. They shouldn't have any effect on Titans..." An ominous sign for the both of them, as they exchanged a glance.

Now assuming that the new noise wasn't an immediate threat, Mikasa sped forward once again to meet the Titans that threatened Eren. She set her sights on the three Titans that now gathered near Trost's outer gate, and as Mikasa reached the edge of the building she was currently running on, she activated her maneuvering gear and took to the sky's.

As she flew forward, towards the Titans from the air with pairing blades at the ready, she could hear the noise growing steadily louder with every second that passed until...

Just as she was preparing to Strike the nearest Titan..

A hailstorm of bullets ripped through the Titan she was about to engage and embedded themselves deep into the stone buildings behind it.

Mikasa maneuvered quickly away from the now falling corpse of the Titan, as she watched in surprise as a second burst of bullets tore into the Titan closest to the hole in Trost. As she scanned the area this last burst of rounds had come from, she quickly realizing the attack had come from _outside_ the wall breach. _But why would the attack come from there and why where these bullets proving to be so effective against the titans..._As she struggled with these questions and searched for the perpetrators of this destruction, two large green objects burst through the jagged hole in the city's outer wall.

The two... _carriages_, as best as she could describe them as,

quickly spewed forth a third barrage of bullets, absolutely obliterating the head and neck of the last of the three Titans near the wall breach.

Realizing, just like the soldiers in the warthogs that their where no more Titans perilously close to them, one of the two carriage gunners leapt off of the vehicle before beginning to move, at an almost inhuman speed, towards the bell tower just opposite her.

Mikasa watched in near wonder as the stranger used, what she could only assume, to be an advanced experimental replacement to the 3D Maneuvering Gear that she was currently using, seemed to effortlessly _fly_ to the upper level of the tower without using any form of tethers or wires. As it reached the top of the tower, a new flood of questions dawned on Mikasa, _Who are these people... why show up now...are they allies? Or...or are they just scavengers here to pick off the flesh from the dying district of Trost._

She had to know, for Eren's sake, for her sake, and for the sake of everyone who was fighting and dying to save this district. She had to know whether they were allies or a new threat.

Mikasa activated her maneuvering gear once more and took aim for the upper reaches of the tower, where the newcomer was currently residing. As she was being pulled by her wires to the upper reaches of the tower, she watched on as the armored newcomer used an advanced looking rifle to... simply annihilate an approaching Titan. The weapon in its hands apparently being so strong as to disfigure even the air itself as the bullet passed from the barrel of the rifle through the neck of the Titan and into building behind it.

And as Mikasa entered the room that the outsider was using to kill Titans from, she noticed, with growing horror and rage, that the outsider was taking aim at Eren. The large, armored being, in her eyes, began to slowly squeeze its finger on the trigger. Adrenaline surged through Mikasa. She lunged forward at the metal being with paring blades in hands intent on killing whatever _this.. thing_ was, to save Eren.

But her heart sank with each step, as the being seemed set on killing Eren, for it didn't even seem to notice her as she charged towards it. Then..

In a flash.

The moment she was in striking distance of the armored being and thought it would shoot Eren, the armored being brought its rifle to bear on Mikasa. Blocking both of her swords in one swift motion with its rifle before, as Mikasa blinked in shock; she couldn't understand _how this being was able to react so quickly_. It disarmed her, dropping its large weapon in the process, only to replaced it with a large pistol like weapon from its thigh that it quickly aimed at her head...

But it didn't pull the trigger.

Everything was still for a moment in the tower as the two beings took each other's presence into full account.

From everything Mikasa could gather from this small fight and minor

lull in violence, this being was pure soldier. Its armor, weapons, and equipment fatigue suggested that it had been in countless battles, with at least one of which having to have been quite recently...

"Why did you attack me?" He, the voice was distinctly male, asked.

Mikasa, now with a gun to her head, facing a man who almost moments ago would have killed all that she cherished in the world, was far too obstinate to answer _this_ man's question.

'Thump' 'Thump'. Mikasa could hear two more individual using 3D maneuvering gear land behind her as the armored man stated his question again, this time more demandingly.

* * *

><p>Damnit, that was too close... If she had been carrying something heavier.. Something Covenant, then that would have been the end of it... Why didn't I notice her sooner?_ Noble Six thought to himself after disarming, what he assumed was a fresh recruit of this planets military. Noble Six knew he was getting sloppy... he wasn't seeing everything he should have been seeing. She shouldn't have gotten that close to him. Over a month of near continuous fighting on Reach was taking its toll on him, especially those last few weeks he had to fight alone, on the dying planet...

But, he would deal with that later. Right now he had to figure out why this soldier attacked him and get back to the fight as quickly as possible, for every second he was dealing with this soldier, it was costing others their lives. Not to mention, he, like the rest of the surviving UNSC members, needed to make a show of force here, for it they didn't, these people might go back on their word and throw the survivors back out into the wild, or worse... start a war with the UNSC.

Captain Schmitt's opening words for the groups' rules of engagement in the city, echoed in his mind; "_Alright men, we have to be the Big Damn Hero's of this fight! These people have no reason to trust us and we have no reason to trust them, but today we have to make our presence __**paramount**__ to the success of this battle. We have to make their citizen and military elements __**believe**__ that it was __**US**__ who saved their lives today and stemmed the tide of battle. That's the type of leverage we will __**need**__ to get them to hold up their end of the bargain." _Schmitt had paused there in thought before adding _"Besides, we might happen to learn a thing or two we can use to leverage against them, if need be, in this battle..."_

"Why did you attack me?" Noble Six questioned the young woman again, as two new individuals landed in the tower behind her. They were two more fresh recruits from the looks of it, one male, and one female. Both blonds with blue eyes, but the boy seemed timid in contrast to the two steely eyed woman in the tower.

Already knowing that he wasn't going to get an answer from the one who attacked him any time soon, he decided to take a different approach. Shifting his questioning to the timid looking boy soldier

who just arrived. "You," Six shifted his head ever so slightly in the boy's direction to get him to realize he was the one being questioned, "Why did your comrade attack me?"

The young soldier shifted his attention to the women at gunpoint, "M-Mikasa..." _So that's her name_.

Six didn't have time to beat around the bush and slowly learn the truth, he needed answers now, -_for god's sake it's a damn warzone and you don't just drag your feet in a warzone-._ "Look _soldier_, I need an answer now. People are dying around here if you haven't noticed, and the quicker I get an answer, the sooner I can begin to save your peoples' lives."

That seemed to knock the blond and Mikasa into their senses. Both of their expressions changed slightly and Mikasa finally answered his question. "I attacked you because you were about to kill Eren."

"Who's Eren?" Six was growing ever more impatient with these people only giving him piecework information to go off of in a warzone.

It was the blond boy who seeming to understand the Spartans growing frustration with their answers who responded, "He's the Titan carrying the large bolder over there... It would take too long to explain now, but.. that Titan's on our side, and that bolder he's carrying on his shoulders is the only chance we have at saving this district. Because that bolder is the only thing capable of blocking the hole in the wall and, Eren.. in his Titan form, is the only one who can move the bolder into position."

The other blond in the group decided to chime at that moment to add, "We need him alive."

Six was relieved to get a straight answer from someone in their group, not to mention he now know something that he could use as leverage against these people. "Understood. Now what are your missions?"

"We are to do anything in our power, including sacrificing our own lives, so that Eren can plug that hole, and give humanity its first victory against the Titans."

Noble Six could understand their position. It was all too alike his last official mission on Reach. _Sacrifice_. "Acknowledged." He turned his attention to Mikasa as he lowered his gun and said, "You're free to go." She refused to move, not even to pick up her swords, following the Spartans comment. Six could see that she didn't trust him any more then he'd trust an elite, so he elaborated, "I'll pass what you have told me to my fellow soldiers. _Eren_... will not be harmed and we will assist in your mission to protect him as he attempts to close the breach."

After he finished, the blond female recruit left, seemingly satisfied with what the Spartan had said, but the other two remained, a mixture of confusion and distrust on their faces. The Spartan could tell it would be some time before they would finally gather their thoughts, so he took that moment to contact the Captain and update him on the current mission of the local military force. Meanwhile, he retrieved the last remaining stimulant cocktail from his tactical trauma kit...

* * *

><p>"You're... You're going to help us?" Was all Armin could think to say as the initial shock of this situation's rapid development sank in.<p>

"Affirmative." Was the armored foreigner's curt response, as he jabbed a needle he had retrieved from a pouch on his thigh into his arm. After the man finished injecting himself with whatever was in that needle, he continued "We made an agreement with your Survey Corps outside these city walls, nearly four hours ago. We agreed to offer our military services to help fight the Titans in exchange for resources to get off this planet and back to the war we're need in."

Armin watched as the armored being, without saying another word, picked up his rifle and returned to the edge of the tower to offer firing support for the service men and women below. He fired one shot, killing a Titan who was closing in on devouring Ian Dietrich, the appointed leader of the breach closing mission, and as that Titan began to fall, one of the horseless carriages weaved out of a side road and into plain view of the Spartan. On its tail was a single Abnormal Titan lunging on all fours at the green carriage.

'Crack! The Titan's body slid forward several dozen meters before coming to a dead stop as its flesh began to smoke and erode. A visible hole pierced through its neck.

All the while Armin could only think of what the man had said: _Outside these walls... off this planet...to the war we're needed in..._ And that was when he finally asked the question that was beginning to burn inside his mind "What are you?"

"I'm a Spartan."

And with that, the Spartan turn his rifle back in the direction of Eren and pulled the trigger.

Immediately both Armin and Mikasa assumed the worst, with Mikasa even going so far as to shout out Eren's name, but as they looked on to where Eren was standing, bolder still in hand, they could see a four meter class Titan at his feet beginning to smolder.

"I would suggest you rejoin the fight, soldiers." The Spartan started as he unceremoniously dropped the gun's spent magazine and began to reload the weapon with a spare. "If your mission is to keep him safe, you should be out there. Protecting him." And for all it was worth, the Spartans remark to Mikasa and Armin was right; they needed to be out there, protecting Eren, not here in this tower keeping an eye on the metal man, called Spartan...

"Come on, Armin." Mikasa said as she leapt out of the tower to rejoin the fray or more appropriately to protect Eren. Armin on the other hand faltered for a second. He had more than a dozen questions to ask the Spartan; about his origins and weaponry but after a moment he finally decided to follow Mikasa. Knowing that in time, he would have his opportunity to know more about these outsiders, the Spartan, and the outside world in which they came from...

* * *

><p>Captain Schmitt pressed the peddle deeper into the floor of the warthog as he maneuvered the beast of a vehicle through the streets of Trost. All the while he could hear Benjamin laying down an almost continuous stream of bullets into any Titan that followed them. Or.. he would have, if he was a better shot. As Schmitt looked back, and saw the sheer quantity of wasted ammunition on the streets and buildings around them, he could only offer a condescending reminder to Galik about their situation, "You do realize we only have a limited supply of bullets, right? So why don't you put those bullets to better use and actually HIT something with them?"

The Insurrectionist paused from his chain of cursing as the Spartan ended the life of their late Titan chaser, a Titan crawler if he had to put a name to it, before responding to the ODST, "I- I would if I _could_!" He frantically looked around for any more Titans in the area before continuing, "You try shooting one of these fucking Cronenberg monster's while being jockeyed down these rubble filled streets!... _Fuck!_ Here's another one!" And with that Benjamin went back to praying and cursing as he tried to kill the new Titan to pick up their trail.

Schmitt let out short grunt as he began to maneuver the warthog back down a main road, which would give the Spartan a clear shot at their new pet Titan. _Cronenberg monster's... I guess that a fitting name for these horrors._ "Six, we have an entourage of one Titan, mind taking care of it for us? Were bearing in to your position from the western wall street."

"Affirmative. Waiting your approach."

As Schmitt finally reached the corner of the block, he pulled the steering wheel hard to the left, causing the warthog to drift out and hard around the corner before getting strong traction on the street and speeding forward once again. Almost immediately, Schmitt could see the glint of the scope from Six's rifle waiting for the Titan's approach, and it didn't take long for the Spartan to spot his pray. Within moments of the warthogs turn, Six's rifle barked forth a single round that punctured the air over Schmitt's head.

A resounding 'thud' sounded seconds later signified that the Spartans aim was as true as ever.

And that was when Schmitt had his first true glance of the Titan Six had mentioned. "Well... _that's_ something new." Was all Schmitt thought aloud, before yelling a reminder to Benjamin that this Titan was not to be shot.

"What..." Benjamin began to ask, but stopped, as he watched the Titan these locals referring to as Eren, begin to wind up his upper body and throw, with all its strength, the bolder it was carrying into the wall breach. Upon finishing the throw, the Titan seemed to... justâ€| die. It just stopped moving and began to smoke away like any Titan corpse the UNSC survivors had come across so far on this planet.

But then... The Titans' neck, specifically the location of the neck critical to permanently killing a Titan, began to move and split open to reveal, what looked to be a cadet of the planets local military.

Which caused Benjamin to almost whisper the question to Schmitt, "...Just where the hell _are we_ Schmitt?"

Captain Schmitt, for all it was worth was just as lost and dumb struck as Benjamin, replied in just as quite a voice, "I have no idea..." _But this crapshoot of a situation just became a whole heaping hell more convoluted... Just who the fuck is fighting who? And what side did we just chose?_

And at that very moment, the Survey Corps' squad, that the UNSC survivors left in the dust in their rush to the city, finally made their grand appearance. Sweeping in and mopping up the few remaining Titans in the immediate area, that the Spartan was unable to get a clear shot on, saving the Titan shifting cadet and a few other soldiers lives in the process...

* * *

><p>Dusk.<p>

Trost District,

Tower overlooking the plugged hole of Trost, currently being tended to by Garrison engineers...

With the final large gathering of Titans within Trost District destroyed a little over an hour ago, the fighting within Trost, for the most part, was effectively over. All that was left was to mop up the few remaining small stragglers that had been missed in the initial cannon bombardments. And with no more Titans in this section of the District, Levi and Erwin being busy interrogating the Titan shifter; it was left to the rest of the Survey Corps members to evaluate, just how useful their new allies really were.

"So... The Spartan did _all_ of this..." Petra asked as she looked at the floor, a small pool of spent 14.5 x 114mm shells littered the floor of the tower and made small clanking sounds as the Survey members moved around the tower to where the Spartan had set up shop. Only a small percentage of the Titans killed from that point were still visible, just smoking skeletons of the monsters that once bore down on the city.

Hanji was the next to speak in her mildly cheerful manor, "From what I could gather, from the small amount of time I saw the Spartan in action. Every shot from his rifle killed a Titan. Which means..." She bent over to count the shells on the ground, "He killed at least twenty eight Titans!"

"I highly doubt he killed a Titan with every shot. Maybe... _maybe_, if was lucky, he killed fifteen but I even doubt that..." Oruo was obviously still sore from the Spartan knocking him to the ground earlier that day.

Hanji, mesmerized by one of the spent shell casings, which she was examining closely under candle light didn't seem to register Oruo's distaste for the Spartan as she replied, "Even if that is true, from the damage we could see in this area, the other four UNSC soldiers killed their fair share of Titans as well.." Now finished with her examination Hanji pocketed a fist full of the spent casings, for further study before standing up. "Not to mention, from what the

Garrisons' Elite squads' reported, the Spartan did kill at the very least seventeen Titans on his own..." Then she added only as an afterthought, "and from the sound of it, he saved at least five members of the garrisons' lives in the process."

Oruo, didn't have a response for that, he _couldn't_ have a response for that, but instead he decided to turned his attention to where the UNSC soldiers had set up camp. They had chosen an open area besides one of the district's outer walls that offered them over a block radius buffer to the city itself with an open fields of fire in every direction. _The makings of a military camp.. if they had more people, _Oruo thought. Arguably, this was the best area in the district to set up camp, if you had to be surrounded by questionably reliable allies.

Even from this distance, Oruo could see that they had positioned their warthogs into a, sort of, shield between themselves and the city itself. Several... lights, _yes, that's what they were called, _lit the area between the UNSC's camp and the city that surrounded them. "How long until the military police try to arrest them? After all, it's not like we actually had jurisdiction to make an alliance with them..."

The question seemed to knock Hanji from her thoughts about getting inside the mind of the Spartan, "I don't know..." She said quietly before pausing in thought. "But, given the state of the District, plus the revelation of a Titan shifter... I think the military police will have their hands full for a while. Not to mention, public opinion about these outsiders within Trost district itself will be quite high. Between saving several elite Garrison soldiers, agreeing to help fight the Titans on the Survey Corps' behalf, and arguably being instrumental in saving the District itself... I doubt that they will make a move on them.. at least, not until Generalissimo Darius Zackly enters the district."

Both Petra and Orou were blindsided by that revolution. No one had even mentioned that possibility of the head of the military coming down from the capital until just now. _The Supreme Commander of the military is coming here?_ They both seemed to ask as they exchanged a glance, before Orou asked the question to Hanji.

"With everything that has transpired here, there's no doubt in my mind, that he will be coming here personally to judge the situation..." Hanji turned her attention to the city itself, "After all, it's what I would do if I were in his position, with all these rumors circulating..."

"So where does that leave them?" Petra asked, bringing her attention back to the UNSC camp. From the distance she could _just_ make out, two of the green soldiers huddled over one of the warthog they drove in on. Seemingly trying to repair it, from a collision it had suffered when it ran over a three meter class Titan. While the Spartan rested with his back against the other warthog, rifle in hand, with white paste oozing from the holes in his armor. Hanji had already proposed that the white paste was some form of medical salve used to heal cuts and burns. "I mean, they have held up their end of the bargain, so far..."

"We'll have to find a way to convince the central government to uphold our deal." Hanji said as she joined the other two in

inspecting the UNSC camp. She could see that the UNSC Captain, Captain Schmitt, and the UNSC civilian, Benjamin, seemed to be on watch, as both of them were manning the two warthogs' respective gun emplacements. "I'd say we have two days at most to come up with an air-tight argument to uphold the deal."

Then, a new thought struck Petra, "Has anyone told them that the Military Police might try to arrest them?"

The minute long silence that followed was the answer to her question...

-END CHAPTER-

****Hope you all enjoyed the chapter!****

****Again, I want to thank my friend DeadzManWalking for Beta reading my story. And ****Anon8792 for offering some suggestions.****

****To all of you who have read this chapter, I thank you for your time and hope you all have a good day/night depending on when your reading this.****

****Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed. In many ways they help fuel my writing.****

8. Chapter 7: Ghosts and Ashes

****Hello again! Lone wolf legendary, is still alive!****

****Again, I will start the way I usually do. Thank you, everyone who has taken time out of their day to read this story, favorited it, Review it and or follow it. I would like to thank: OverratedPendragon, rancorlover, Anon8792, Icesquall, Teleri Sina Atari, BLacKxBUrN, YourOfficalEditor, Cooler, Krulla Chief, Valkarious, Guest, and Celis for your reviews. Thank you!****

****OverratedPendragon****: Well the answer for that is-[REDACTED]. Much like ****Hanji's gender in the manga-look it up, she isn't engendered in the manga, only in the anime- I'm leaving plot potential points unknown until its written, or not, into the story****.****

****rancorlover, Cooler****: your answer awaits you in this chapter****

****Anon8792, YourOfficalEditor, Valkarious, and Celis****: Thank you for your compliments!****

****Icesquall****: I fixed the wording in that area for clarification.****

****Teleri Sina Atari****: I would if I could and culture shock is something that I have been looking forward to writing!****

****BLacKxBUrN: If you spend the time to review, I feel obliged to acknowledge it. And yes Mikasa continues to be Eren's knight in**

shining armor :p**

Krulla Chief**: I'll do my best to watch those words and here's to you for keeping me to a standard.**

Now that that's out of the way, here's the next Chapter!

Chapter 7: Ghosts and Ashes

* * *

><p>Six opened his eyes to the artificial glow of interior lighting.

_Almost immediately he noticed that he was not wearing his armor and... he had no recollection of how or why he was there. He just... _was_. _And for some unconscious reason he didn't question that fact_.

As he sat up from the table he found himself on, he took in his surroundings.

_He was in a medical recovery room, __empty recovery tables lining both sides of the room__, and all save for one entrance to the room was sealed... Not a living soul could be seen nor heard, only the soft rumbles of the ship's internal workings was all that met his ears._

_Seeing no alternative, Six stood up and walked towards the open door. _

When he finally passed into the hallway outside of the room, he was confronted by three inscriptions hung on the wall opposite the door. The first inscription was the most dominant and was positioned above the other two, reading 'UNSC Hopeful; Wing E2'.

A flood of familiarity passed over Six as he read those words. This was the place where he enlisted and became a Spartan. This was the place where everything changed...

Why was it so empty?_... It was almost always packed with the injured and mortally wounded. __Those people who would miraculously be brought back to life, by the sheer skill and willpower of the ships surgeons..._

Beneath that inscription, pointing to his left was another sign that read 'Operation Rooms 16E-30E; Orange line Tram', while another pointing to his right read 'Operation Rooms 1E-15E; Elevator system C'.

As Six looked down both respective corridors, he noticed that the airlock to his left was sealed preventing him from going further down that path, but to his right the airlock was still open, almost as if to lead him somewhere else...

_As he began to walk down this new path, everything behind __him seemed to fade into nothingness as he passed by... almost as if to prevent him from going back__. By the time he reached 'Operation Room 4E' he was struck by another memory of his past. _

'Operation Room 4E'

_This was the room he had entered as a kid, and exited as a Spartan. This was the reward for passing training, to become a thing that could change the world. He remembered how this was his goal, for so many nights, from the day he enlisted, to __**become**__... something __**more**__ than he could ever be as a normal person... to help change the __**very fabric**__ of the war. To be the nameless, faceless, hero. To become a __**Spartan**__._

He also remembered meeting Lieutenant Commander De Guzman in these halls, just prior and after his operation. The man had lost his left leg during an emergency recovery operation to the heavily wounded UNSC Yorktown during the battle of Alpha Aurigae. De Guzman was one of fifteen soldiers to volunteer to enter the floundering vessel and search for survivors and the wounded.

Reports were hazy as to the specifics of his injury, but what is clearly known was that at some point during the operation a pressurized pipeline in one of the ship's halls exploded near him, lacerating his leg to the bone. But instead of retreating back to the UNSC Hopeful, he opted to stomach a handful of stimulants and apply a field dressing to his leg, before continue to help orchestrate the rescue operation...

In the end, his actions along with that of the others who ventured into the floundering UNSC York managed to save seventy of the original three hundred man crew, including the captain and most of the bridge personnel before the Destroyer's core detonated. Had he turned back when his leg was originally injured, he could have saved it, but De Guzman saw saving a few more lives worth sacrificing his leg over. After that, he was offered a position away from the frontlines due to his injury, but he had refused, opting to stay aboard the UNSC Hopeful and replace his missing leg with a military grade prosthetic.

_Four years later, De Guzman would end up losing an eye while helping to evacuate military and civilian personnel wounded during the Battle of Eridanus II. When Six had finally met De Guzman, eleven years after losing his eye, Six could see that he was still ready to sacrifice __even__ more if it was ever needed to save lives._

_Which lead Six's thoughts to wander to the ship's captain__, Vice Rear Admiral Ysionris Jeromi, who had been verbally reprimanded, demoted, and promoted for taking these __sorts__ of actions, __again and again__, over the course of the Human-Covenant and the Insurrectionist Wars. __Taking__ a ship that amounted to a field hospital, with no weapons or armor to speak of, into the middle of active battles in an attempt to save as many lives as possible... The Vice Rear Admiral had become next to a legend for these actions and was even awarded the Colonial Cross twice for these actions._

_But Six was torn from these thoughts as his body began to move him forward once more. __But this time without his consent._

_As he moved forward he was__ led down another corridor that was supposed to house the area's elevators__. But..._

_When he finally saw what was down that corridor, his heart

sank..._

Before him, the corridor shifted from the immaculate clean metal of a medical ship, into an older worn metal of a colony planet. Even the floors changed as it approached the far end of the hall, from ship metal flooring to a ground made out of dirt, grass, sand and blood. And at the far end of the hall.. were the elevators were supposed to be located, sat the gaping, charred, and beaten jaws of a fallout bunker.

Ignoring Six's conscious wishes to stop, his body continued to move him forward, ever closer to the darkness within those doors...

Six could never forget those doors, nor what had transpired on that planet during the Battle of Leonis Minoris...

Dian Cecht.

_As soon as Six passed the threshold into the bunker, all light vanished from the hall in which he had came. He could hear the bunker doors begin to seal, but he already knew they never managed to seal it in time... And that was when all __**those**__ memories assaulted Six._

...It began like it always did, first he heard crying, whimpering, and pleads for mercy, but then it all changed in an instant as the slaughter began. Vivid images of the battle seared into Six's mind like a plasma bolt as he was forced to relive these memories. Soon his body grew wet and warm as he was covered in the fresh blood of those who were being slaughtered around him... Eventually he was buried beneath their fresh corpses, using them to hide from the Covenant. But this was only the beginning to Six's hell, as every battle he was ever involved in or witnessed began barraging him in quick succession, reminding him of all his failures and the death that consistently existed around him. All the while whispered and spoken words where being etched into the Spartan's mind until he could finally break himself free from sleep's cold embrace...

"_How__** far**__ are you willing to go?"_

_"We're both __**ghosts**__, you and I..."_

_"__**Run**__ and don't look back-"_

_"-Are you a __**puppet**__ or are you a __**Spartan**__!"_

"_Folks need __**heroes**__-"_

_"There will be __**another time**__..."_

"_What do you __**fight for**__-"_

* * *

><p>Day 1 After landing.<p>

Trost District, UNSC 'camp'

The golden rays of early morning sunlight began to slowly crest over

the colossal walls that surrounded Trost District, as Captain Schmitt prepared for the end of the of his night watch. He turned to see if his... _partner_, Galik, was still doing his job. That being, to watch for possible threats to the group and, _not_, looting any of the nearby abandoned buildings.

_Good, he's still doing his job. _Schmitt thought to himself, _though, I bet he's probably more nervous about these people than a reprimandation from me, especially since our only easy way out is now blocked by a bolder the size of a building..._

After that, Schmitt did a quick sweep of the buildings on his half of the camp as well, before going to check on the rest of the sleeping survivors.

Everyone was sleeping with a gun in their hands. Not exactly a sign of trust, but who could blame them? Nearly a month of continues fighting on Reach and now _this_ whole situation... even Schmitt had slept with a loaded weapon during his shift to sleep...

Regardless, in five minutes, Schmitt was going to have to wake everyone up to begin their first morning on this planet. Something that not even he was looking forward to doing. So much politicking would need to be done. They had been lucky that this... walled community, had been attacked. It had allowed them to show off their skills and bypass any initial politicking, but now... now that this battle was done and over with, they'd have to deal with all the politics in full.

Which meant, that whole situation was still a balancing act. The group of survivors would have to look strong, so that the local military wouldn't try and break their agreement or possibly even go so far as to try and confiscate their weapons as a show of superiority. But the group couldn't look too strong either, less the local government begins to fear their ability and in an attempt to maintain their consolidated power turn on the survivors of Reach...

Schmitt sighed at these thoughts_. I signed up to protect the people of the UNSC and to shoot a rifle at anyone who would harm them, but now... now I have to play politician... __**just great**__..._

Schmitt still in his thoughts, turned his attention to the resting Spartan, _I wonder if you ever thought you'd end up in a situation like this..._ Schmitt took a second to take in the subtle details of Six's armor; the dents, the burns, and the dust and blood that caked his armor. _No... I'm sure you never thought a situation like this would ever happen..._

And that was when Schmitt noticed small, subtle shifts in the Spartan's position. Had Schmitt not been focusing so carefully on the Spartan to begin with, he would have never had noticed. Even now, watching closely to the tiny shifts and tension in the Spartans arms, legs, and fingers, he wondered if his eyes were just playing tricks on him, for these changes was _just_, barely visible...

That was when the Spartan's head swiveled up, taking in everything around him. It seemed that he was already looking for any potential threats or changes to the local area. Rumor had it, that this was the

norm for Spartans in the field or at base waiting for a mission. And had that been all the Captain had seen, he wouldn't have even spared a thought to it, but, the Captain knew what those twitches and muscle tensions before and knew what they meant. He had seen it countless times on battle worn marines and even veteran ODST's during their times away from the battlefield.

Most tried to hid it, even in their sleep, but few were even able to even hide it well even in the day. The only ones he had ever seem to have any real success in hiding it were the ODST's he had fought with and lead. Their ability to hide it even in sleep was the only real reason why Schmitt, was able to have even the faintest idea of what Six had experienced, though, this was by far the most well hidden he had ever seen...

So, the Captain began to prod, to see if his thoughts were correct. "How are you doing Six?"

Six, by now, had by now already gathered himself and was checking his gear and armor when he replied with a short response, "Fine, Sir."

Schmitt knew better then to expect a different answer from the Spartan. ODST's could sometimes be vary closed about their personal history, and from the very brief time he had spent with the Spartans during the fall of Reach, he knew that Spartans were in a league of their own, when it came to not sharing personal history. They'd be very open with sharing weapons, gear, and necessary mission knowledge, but they wouldn't say a single word about anything that wasn't mission or battle focused.

So Schmitt tried a different approach, as he looked over at the two Marines who were sleeping quietly with rifles in their hands. "Looks like they're sleeping peacefully..." he paused making sure that Six was looking at the sleeping duo, "I'd be willing to bet that they aren't dreaming of anything, I mean, after everything we've seen this past month alone, a dreamless night could be considered a godsend."

Six originally, only offered a nod, a gesture made so small that at first Schmitt had mistaken it as Six merely adjusting his head while taking in a breath. But as soon as Six offered his response, did Schmitt notice what the gesture really was. "Dreams... they can be as dangerous a weapon as a gun or a grenade."

Schmitt shifted his attention to the ground in thought as he pondered that answer. As dangerous as a gun or grenade... He was right. After a few seconds Schmitt snapped out of it. "Ya... dreams can be deadly."

After that, the two stood in silence for another minute as they kept an eye on Benjamin and the perimeter before Schmitt finally spoke up once more. "Ow, I almost forgot."

Schmitt fished his hand into one of the hard pouches on his armor before retrieving a data module and passed it to Six. "We found this on Operative Foresights body... And since you're the closest thing to ONI, you've got the right to hold onto it."

Six only seemed to look the module over for a few seconds before

placing it in one of his armors own hard points. "Thank you, Sir."

Schmitt had nothing to back it up on but he had a gut feeling that Six was going to see what was in that module. If he would share that information with anyone else... well, that was a whole other question. Regardless, it was time to woke Corporal Stacker and Private Schultz.

As the two Marines woke up, gathered themselves and prepared for the day ahead of them, Schmitt once again turned towards the Spartan. "You know... I've been thinking Six. If the situation was reversed and we found these people at the doorstep to one of our colony worlds during an invasion, even if we made a deal with them, ONI would have shown up by now and have whisked them away to be 'dealt with' in someâ€¦ 'appropriate manner'."

Six's response was noteworthy to Schmitt since he didn't deny that ONI would do that, "ONI would have."

"So the question becomes... where.. is this world's ONI? And why haven't they come for us yet?"

Six was quite for a moment before he answered in a measured manner. "If I were to hazard a guess, it would be because we have made ourselves known to too many people in this area for an organization, ONI like, to remove us from the public eye without causing more internal and external problems for the organization and the nation as a whole."

"Hmm... So this battle, which caused us to be seen by so many people, really was our godsend..." But that was when a new thought hit Schmitt, "But knowing ONI, they would have other alternatives to get their hands on the outsiders. How long until this place's ONI makes a move on us?"

By now, Six was focusing on a new group of local soldiers who were watching them that had an emblem of a green Unicorn on their uniforms. Given that the Survey Corps and the Garrison used an emblem of enclosed wings and roses respectively, the only other local military element they had not yet seen in person up to this point was the Military Police, and it seemed that these were them.

Why a unicorn? That doesn't exactly seem like a military emblem... but Schmitt's thoughts were cut short as Six finally spoke up.

"My guess: when a high ranking official arrives that can pass judgment on us, that's when they will move in."

"So we may have some time..."

After several more minutes of silence, taking in the sight of the local military watch them and smelling the beginnings of rotting flesh, Schmitt spoke up again "I think... I might have an idea."

* * *

><p>Petra sat on the edge of one of the still, mostly intact buildings that overlooked the UNSC camp. With Oruo and Eld to either side of her. She couldn't help but think back to the events that had

transpired the previous day, during this quite morning...<p>

Petra was still unsure of that to do about these newcomers. Ever since the previous night when she, and the rest of Levi's squad, save for Levi himself who was dealing with the Titan shifter, had been told that they were to observe and protect the newcomers from anything that might threaten their agreement, she didn't know how to feel about them. They had done everything they said they would, and now, they were probably going to be arrested in the next two days for being what they were: outsiders. But that wasn't the thing that was gnawing at her, what was truly bothering her was the fact that no one had told them about that possibility yet.

It just didn't sit right with her. Arresting them would have seemed like the right thing to do a day ago when they had just arrived, but now... they had risked their lives to save the district and this was how they were going to be repaid... like criminals.

But she was brought out of these thoughts when Eld noticed something unexpected. "Commander Pixis is here? And he's heading over to the outsiders camp!?"

That grabbed the attention of everyone in the group as they turned their attention to Eld for directions. "What are your orders, sir?" Gunther asked.

"We've got to get down there to see what he's planning on doing." And as he said that, Eld leapt down off the building in hopes of intercepting Commander Pixis before he reached the outsiders.

But they were just moments too late. By the time the squad made it to Commander Pixis, he had already made contact with the outsider's camp, causing Petra and the rest in the squad to hesitate. They didn't know how to tackle the situation in front of them, Pixis outranked them all, but his objective at the moment was unknown and could very well ruin the tentative alliance between the two groups...

"So you're the outsiders who have helped my soldiers block the gate." Pixis began with a large smile on his face. Proving yet another eccentric act for this eccentric Commander. "I wanted to thank you all for helping get my troops get out of their alive and in one piece."

"Your welcome," Captain Schmitt replied, still covered head to toe in his black armor. "But we didn't save everyone..."

"No..." Pixis responded distantly, before refocusing on the man in front of him. "You didn't. But your actions in this battle saved many more lives which would have otherwise been lost in the battle and I commend you for that. After all, from what I have gathered, this isn't your fight."

Schmitt didn't seem to have a response for that, so after several seconds, Pixis once again spoke up but this time placing his attention on the Spartan. "You know, I've heard many rumors circulating about you. Several say you're over 2.2 meters tall, silent as a ghost, and faster than even a Titan. And others have even suggested that you wear a green suit of metal with a gold reflective face to watch the world around you. Like some long forgotten demon of

old..."

Petra had already heard the first rumor from many soldiers the previous night who only had fleeting glimpses of the Spartan in action but this was the first time she had heard anyone mention the second rumor about the Spartan. _Green armor and a gold faceplate..._ _Where did he hear that one from?_

As Petra made those thoughts to herself, Pixis looked the Spartan up and down before continuing with a cocked smile. "I can't say I'm disappointed... You may not be quite as tall as the rumors suggest, and your armor and faceplate are the wrong colors. But you sure do look the part of a legend."

It was then that Commander Pixis offered his hand to the Spartan which resulted in the Spartan raising his hand to shake. But instead of immediately grabbing Pixis hand, the Spartan seemed to slow his motions as if he was afraid to break the object he was about to grab.

But as their hands finally met, Pixis could only offer a short laugh, "You are a peculiar one; you know that? But, regardless, I'm glad you and your people came to our aid."

After that, Pixis seemed to once again shift gears, as he spoke to the survivors as a group "Which reminds me, Generalissimo Zackly, the head of all three branches of our military will be arriving to the city in the next two days. No doubt he will want to meet you all. After all, the rumors about you all have already reached the capital..."

As Pixis' continued, his face seemed to darken, "And while your actions here have made you a friend to many in the local Garrison and heroes to the citizens of Trost, there are those in the interior who fear what you are and what you might be..."

"So... Zackly will be the one to decide our ultimate fate?" It was Captain Schmitt who decided to fill in the gape Pixis was alluding to.

"That would be correct." Pixis began, "If it were me, I would uphold your agreement with the Survey Corps. Especially after what had transpired yesterday with your help. But ultimately, he has the military authority over what would happen to your people, save for if the king, if he were to decide to weigh into this affair. This, after all, is still a possibility since you do represent a foreign power... but ultimately, it will be the military and the people who will decide your fate."

Petra could barely hear the UNSC civilian mutter something along the lines of "_even kings bow to_ _the mob_" under his breath.

It was then that Captain Schmitt spoke up but to Petra and the rest of Levi's squads' surprise the UNSC Captain did not seem upset... _It's as if he already expected this outcome_. "Commander Pixis, thank you for coming here and sharing this information with us." he then motioned his head to the district in front of him as he continued, "And as a show of our gratitude, if you would allow, we would be more than willing to help in the recovery effort to retrieve and help bury the bodies of the fallen in your city."

Pixis cocked yet another smile; as if that was the answer he was hoping for. "I can have that arranged by tomorrow." Pixis then turned to Petra and the rest of the Squad "Though, your military escorts will have to be with you at all times."

"I would expect nothing less."

This caused a hailstorm of thoughts to bombard Petra and the rest of Levis squad.

_What are these two up to...? _

Pixis...

Schmitt...

Is Pixis trying to use this as a way to get the outsiders to sympathize more with our cause... or is this some sort of unorthodox method to drum up support to keep the outsiders around... What was his game?

And on that note, why did it seem like the outsiders already knew that they were going to run into this problem...Have they really thought that far in advance? Or... have they already had experienced this sort of situation before... or maybe they were looking for ways to escape the city...

Why was Pixis allowing them to help?

* * *

><p>The following day<p>

Recovery staging area

"I heard those outsiders are going to be assisting in recovery today. I guess it will be their first day as well for this nightmare..."

This was the fourth time today Jean had overheard people mentioning those outsiders as he put on a pair of gloves for the... the work ahead of him. As he did so, he noticed Annie quietly preparing beside him and decided to ask her a question, to offset he nerves about the work ahead of him. "Hey, you've seen these outsiders already, haven't you?"

Annie only turned her eyes towards Jean, "Yes, I have."

"Do you have any idea why they would volunteer to help us in this... job?"

Annie's attention seemed to shift to the ground in front of her, as if she was drawn into thought, "They... you could tell that they have seen and dealt with this before..."

"Do you think we will cross paths with them?"

But it seemed Annie was done talking, for she walked away as Jean was asking this question. Leaving Jean with nothing but his thoughts and

the ghostly silence that surrounded death. _Where's Marco when you need him?_

* * *

><p>As Jean walked down the blood stained and damaged streets of Trost, not even fifteen minutes into his shift on recovery duties, did Jean run into the outsiders. If Jean was remembering correctly this was about the area he had last seen Marco...<p>

Their giant green metal carriage, towing a cart that was already leaden with several corpses, respectfully positioned and covered within the cart was the first thing he saw. A mildly unkempt outsider seemed to be watching the vehicle as two Survey Corps members kept watch on the outsiders. Another two outsiders, what he assumed was the rumored Spartan, and a black clad soldier gathered around a corpse on the far side of their metal machine.

As Jean approached, he could finally make out some of what the black armored soldier were saying, "Looks like another Trainee-"

This drew a morbid curiosity out of Jean, _who could it be that they had found? Who could have died here?_

But as Jean drew closer to the outsiders and the corpse that was hidden away, he began to have second thoughts on seeing who the corpse happened to be. Reluctantly, he came to the realization that someone would need to identify the body so he stepped forward. Finally getting a clear view of the body, but when he did, he immediately regretted the decision.

"_Marco_.."

Jean began to mutter quietly to himself as he looked at the corpse and slowly backed away. Unbeknownst to himself, he had already drawn the attention of the two outsiders. But, Jean was too caught up in his own thoughts to notice, "_Someone had to have seen him die... Someone had to know how he went out.._"

And with those quiet words, Jean turned and slowly began to walk down the street in search of a ghost which could tell him how his friend had died...

Jean was so caught up in his thoughts that he didn't hear the black armored soldier call for him. Only when the man put his hand gently on his shoulder and firmly hold Jean back from walking away into the nothingness of despair, did Jean notice him.

The first thing Jean noticed about the man was his black armor and silver visor, which in Jean's current state reminded him of descriptions of what death himself looked like. _Clad in black, with a silver-gray skull..._ That thought was quickly shaken out of him as the silver visor became transparent revealing the man beneath the mask.

His face was muddied and hard. Two deep scars dug across the left side of his face. One began just beneath his left eye and splayed out and down across his cheek, with the other began in the middle of his face, just beneath the nose but above the lip, that also followed the same orientation as the first. Other markings of war were also

littered his face, but those two scars stood out above the rest.

But when the man began to speak, Jean was taken by the fierceness of the man's eyes, the eyes of a hardened soldier. "You alright there kid?" The man looked at Marco's body, "It seems like you know him... Who was he?"

Jean was still shell shocked from seeing Marko on the ground, missing half his face, answered the man numbly, in a vague hope that the man would let him go to look for someone who saw how Marco died. "His name is Marko Bott and he was in command of the 19th Trainee Squad..." Desperation slowly set in as he realized that he was already speaking of his friend in past tense, "Hey... you wouldn't have seen what happened to him, had you?"

"No. And from the looks of it, I doubt anyone else saw what happened..."

When the man said that, Jean pulled away in repulsion. _No, someone had to have seen it... He wasn't right, someone saw it._

But before Jean could move away to seek his answer, the armored man grab him by the shoulder again, and this time moved closer to Jean. "Hey! Before you go off chasing shadows and squandering what little time you have to make peace with the dead I want you to know something. You should feel _lucky_ that you even have a body to bury, we rarely get that luxury, so don't squander it. Because if you do," His voice then became quieter as he continued, "it will be something you will regret till your dying breath..."

This caused Jean to freeze, _what was he getting at?_ And that was when Jean noticed the emblem on the man's armor. A flaming skull overlaying what appeared to be a coffin. _Was death so common in their outfit that they found it fitting to consider themselves already dead?_

"What?"

"You heard me." His grip loosened, "I can tell this is the first friend you've had die in battle. But as a soldier, I am sorry to inform you that this will not be the last. As long as you fight, you will know people who die. And although the sight of their bodies might repulse you and drive you away, those are not the ones who will haunt your nights. It is those you never _see_ die; those who disappear in the fog of war. _They_ will haunt your dreams. For you will never have any closure about their deaths, hell, you wouldn't even be able to know if they really _are_ dead... for all you know, they may very well be suffering a fate _worse_ than death."

And that was when Jean stopped resisting. He was starting to truly understand the gravity of the situation, "I... I think I understand..."

The armored man let his arm fall after that, but Jean only stood there for a moment before walking towards Marco's side. He stood there for several seconds, minutes, or hours... It was hard for Jean to tell, but in that time, he finally found some inkling of closure for his friend's death. After that, with the assistance of the Spartan, and the black soldier, known as ODST, Jean recover Marco's body...

Before the outsiders moved away from Jean's area for recovery, Jean finally asked the ODST about his emblem and the response he received was cryptic, "It reminds us of what we volunteered for... and how we cheat death."

* * *

><p>That Night<p>

The Recovery Pyres

Jean sat in silence as he watching the corpses of those who fell two days ago slowly burn away into ash...

The words of the outsiders, as well as, Marco's last words to him from two days ago still gnawed at the back of Jeans mind. After everything he had went through, all the hard choices he had to make... There was no way he was going into the Military Police, not any more...

He bent down and picked up a shard of bone, reminiscing to the ashes about Marco...

It was then that Jean saw Marko's ghost and was assured in his action. He solemnly turned to the other cadets as he drew their attention, "Hey, guys... have you decided which force you're joining? I've made up my mind..." He started to tremble and had to hold onto himself as he continued, "I... I... I'm joining the Survey Corps."

And in that moment of silence that followed his declaration, while he was holding himself steady did he notice the outsiders once more. They had arrived so quietly, that it was only the presence of the Survey Corps group with them that made the outsiders presence known. They were near the outer wall near the pyres, just visible by the fire's light. Their vehicles sat quietly besides them as they set to work.

As Jean stood there, shard of bone still in hand, numbly thinking about everything, did he noticed that they were creating four small mounds of rock. Which they then ornamented by placing a rifle vertical, muzzle buried in each mound. After that, a helmet was adorned on three of the rifles, while a flag was placed at the feet of each rifle. The ODST's flag, Jean noticed, was bloodied, burnt, and more torn than the others...

Though Jean had never seen this act before, it didn't take a genius to understand what each mound represented. Graves...

He then watched as a sort of numbed viewer as the group, in their foreign tongue, line up. And then, moving in unison they went into a position of attention, before, as one, solute the unmanned graves. A ghostly melody began to play shortly after, originating somewhere within the group of outsiders...

The melody was quite, but sad. Almost like it was playing out all those who had departed. By now everyone knew that they were there, but no one bothered them. For the outsiders, in that moment, were one of them. To share and shed blood, even if it is not witnessed by each

other, could still create an odd union of brotherhood.

In the end, they lowered their solutes after the melody ended, before dispersing to honor the makeshift memorial's to their fallen comrades in turn. In their own ways...

After nearly an hour, they gathered their gear, leaving nothing more than four piles of rock behind, before heading back to the area they had originally set up camp...

Leaving those who had witnessed this event, feeling oddly closer to the outsiders, even though no words were ever shared between the two groups...

-Chapter End-

****Hope you all enjoyed the chapter!****

****Again, I want to thank my friend DeadzManWalking for Beta reading my story. And Anon8792 for offering some suggestions.****

****To all of you who have read this chapter, I thank you for your time and hope you all have a good day/night depending on when your reading this.****

****Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed. In many ways they help fuel my writing.****

9. Chapter 8: The Trial

****I Live again! Lone wolf legendary, is still alive!****

****A lot has happened in the year since my last update. I graduated College, started University, and I'm preparing to declare for a Doctorates program. So I apologies for the wait... Given this reality I may be a bit more sporadic in my updates for a time to come.

****I will start my usual way by thanking everyone who has taken time out of their day to read this story, favorited it, Review it and or follow it. I would like to thank: Icesquall, rancorlover, Cellis, Guestie, Cooler, BlacKxBUrN, Krulla Chief, SpecH82, Robbie992282, Ever, keys of fate, bittersweet Alchemest, WinstonthaNinja, Reishin Amara, TheEliteDucky, blaiseingfire, Vietchaos98, Spartan Ninja, The Digger92, Isaiah, and Junior VB for your reviews. Thank you!****

****Icesquall: I love those trailers.****

****Cellis: Yes, though there are others that could fit.****

****rancorlover, Guestie, Cooler, BlacKxBUrN, Krulla Chief, Guest, keys of fate, Reishin Amara, ****TheEliteDucky, and everyone else. Thank You for your support!****

****bittersweet Alchemest and ****blaiseingfire: I am happy I was able to move you in the last chapter. Those feels.****

****For those of you who are coming up with theories and suggestions keep it up. Only time will tell until answers are reveled...****

****Now that that's out of the way, here's the next Chapter!****

****Chapter 8: The Trial****

*** * ***

><p>Day of Eren's Trial<p>

Mess Hall

Jean maneuvered through the mess hall, breakfast in hand, in a daze. His mind was still trapped in the events that transpired the previous day. From meeting the outsiders, seeing Marko, and from the words that the ODS had said to him. So much had transpired in such a little amount of time that Jean was left feeling numb and out of body as he found a seat and began eating. He was so disconnected from his world that he didn't even notice who was sitting near him, or even the taste of his food. All he did was there sat quietly thinking about everything and nothing.

It was only when he heard a familiar voice beside him did he register the world around him once more.

"Eren's being put on trial? For what?"

It was Mikasa who had jarred Jean from his stupor.

"I don't know the details." Armin responded, "I think it's about deciding how to deal with Eren. Rumor has it that they even plan on putting the outsiders on trial as well."

This grabbed Jean's attention as he continued to listen to the conversation besides him.

"What does that mean?" Mikasa asked Armin, referring to Eren's situation.

"They're probably deciding whether he lives or dies.-"

Mikasa stood up with a look of shock and repulsion on her face as the gravity of Eren's situation sunk in. But before Mikasa could say anything the doors to the mess hall were thrown open in a manner that demanded everyone's attention.

At the door, three Military police personnel scanned the room for whomever they were sent to retrieve. "Mikasa Ackerman! Armin Alert! Are you present?"

"Yes," Mikasa answered. She stole a glance at Armin who remained silent.

Without pause the lead officer continued, "You have been ordered to appear at the trial this afternoon as witnesses!" He then called out another name, "Jean Kirstein!"

"Yes," Jean responded somewhat meekly, he hadn't expected being

called out by the military police, nor, would he have expected to be singled out separately from the Mikasa and Armin.

"You have been ordered to appear at the second trial this afternoon as a witness."

Second trial? Jean wondered to himself as the realization quickly washed over him, _The outsiders!_

* * *

><p>Third Day on planet<p>

Midday

Captain Schmitt stood vigilant at the precipice of the two warthogs waiting for the military police to arrive. Six had already informed him, through eavesdropping on conversations using the coms equipment in his armor, that Eren the Titan shifter was already being prosecuted in a military tribunal. Which meant it was only going to be a matter of time before the Military police would arrive to bring them to court.

He had already worked out a plan with the Spartan to make sure that the entire group wasn't taken away leaving valuable military assets to be confiscated by the local military, as well as prepared, to the best of their abilities, a collection of videos and audio files, with their appropriate gear, to be used in convincing the tribunal to uphold their original agreement.

Schmitt inwardly sighed as he looked down at his quickly shrinking shadow before immediately shifting he gaze to this planet's sun. _It's just about high noonâ€|_ Schmitt thought back to some old western movies that he would occasionally catch Corporal Eastwood watching, usually before or after he mentioned that one of ancestors was an actor in said movies. If he recalled correctly, the confrontations in those movies usually happened just aboutâ€|_ _now_. Schmitt sighed as he came out of that thought as he remembered Corporal Eastwood had died during the exodus of New Alexandria.

It was just about then that Schmitt finally saw a green uniform come from around a corner, followed closely by a dozen more armed men under the same unicorn insignia. Schmitt quickly said a silent prayer to himself as he checked to see if everyone was in position.

Corporal Stacker and Private Schultz where "working" on the warthogs to either side of him, heads bent down as they appeared to work. Weapons, which sat just within arm's reach of both of them, were out of sight to the approaching Military police; cocked, loaded, and safeties off. Both engineers had instinctively positioned themselves behind the warthogs, in their 'work', to use as cover if all hell broke loose.

Galik, as planned, was assisting Corporal Stacker in her 'repairs' on one of the warthogs and if things were to go badly he would be one driving that warthog since it had become self-evident he was not suited to be a machine gunner. _Too much wasted ammo_.

Six, was stooped further away from the group as he continued his

normal daily routine of disassembling, cleaning, and reassembling weapons. If it wasn't enough that his armor and size marked him as the black sheep in the group, then his unique behavior in the upcoming confrontation might be enough to sway the cards into the survivors favor.

The lead officer stopped sixty paces from Schmitt, flanked on either side by half a dozen officers with muskets drawn and at the ready before exclaiming, "I have been ordered to arrest you, all of you for being foreign entities within our walled nation! Come peacefully and their will be a trial to determine how we move forward from here!"

None of the survivors reacted to the Officer's demand. Schmitt, himself, continued to stand where he was, with his weapon held causally in his hands before responding nonchalantly, almost dumb to their demands, "I'm sorry, our understanding of your language is a little rough, could you repeat that?" Their response to this question would be the key to deciding how to handle this confrontation.

And from the look on the Officer's goateed face, it was clear that these military police soldiers hadn't done any research on their targets, for it appeared like they actually believed what Schmitt had said. The lead officer even sighed with a look of impatience as he began to slowly repeat himself, "I. Have. Been. Ordered. To. Arr-"

But that was as far as he got before every Survivor pulled their weapons on the Military police soldiers, except for the Spartan who merely stood up. This drastic change of events seemed to have dumbfounded the Military Police soldiers and caused the head MP to visibly jump at the sight of the change in events. Although, to their credit, they did quickly get their wits about themselves as Schmitt spoke up.

"That's what I thought you were saying." Schmitt looked at Six, who then began to slowly move to one side of the large group of MP's. As he moved in a large arc, he kept his head stooped down like a wolf circling it's pray... Waiting for the right moment to attack. Which definitely shook the MP's a bit more than Schmitt had hoped. "We have no interest in surrendering ourselves to you. We represent a sovereign nation and we would prefer to be treated as such, not as some pesky vermin to be pushed around."

Schmitt gestured to Six to stop his hunt, and stand still. "So, we will offer you this. You can take one of us of your choice, to represent us in this trial your people have set up to decide our fate. But, they are to be treated as dignitaries, not as prisoners" Schmitt put special emphasis on those two words, for he was sure now, given who they were turning to and pointing their rifles at the Spartan, that Six was going to be their choice.

Schmitt once again made a nonaggressive signal to his men as a whole, resulting in all the survivors lowering their weapons. "So, what do you say? Who will be our dignitary?"

Schmitt held his breath as he waited to see if they would even accept the deal, or if he would have to instill plan B. After several seconds of tense silence as the Military Police exchange glances to

one another, the lead MP finally spoke up. His voice cracked, but after he cleared it, his voice only sounded slightly shaken. "We.. We accept your offer. He," the Military Police Officer pointed at Six, "will be your representative."

Perfect. Schmitt still needed to put on a bit of an act. He still had to make sure that the Military Police believed that they were in control, so he played off their choice like it was not what he was hoping for, "You sure you want him? He's not much of a talker, I don't think he will get our message across that well." He could tell from the MP's faces that that was their plan. "At the very least, can you let him bring in a few recordings to show where we came from?"

They seemed to think on that point for a few minutes, taking delight in having the upper hand once again, if only because Schmitt was playing them, before finally agreeing to allow Six to bring a handful of data pads to be used as visual aids during the trial. No doubt, they were planning on trying to use this information on the Survivors in one shape or form for their own benefit, but that was acceptable.

With that part of the plan taken care of, Six moved to the nearest warthog and began to disarm himself in preparation to be taken away as a military dignitary. As he removed all the visible weapons from his person he made sure to avoid bringing any attention to the energy sword that was attached to his back, which to the uninformed native's appeared as nothing more than an ornate decoration. After he finished removing all of his weapons, he moved to Captain Schmitt and handed him a worn, chipped and bloody Kukri, one which was labeled with another Spartans serial number. "Keep it safe." Was all the Spartan told the ODS as he turned and secured the seven data pads for the upcoming trial.

The newly dignified Spartan then moved to be escorted by the local Military Police to the location of the trial.

Their gamble had worked. Six, the only survivor who was skilled enough to survive alone, with no weapons, was going into a political hornets' nest by himself. And now, if the trial were to go badly, the rest of the survivors would have a leg up on the native military, for they would know through Six's helmet, exactly when to start fighting. Well before that order could fall to the soldiers stationed around the survivor's encampment.

* * *

><p>Military Tribunal<p>

Pain

That was all Eren could feel as everything around him moved in a hazy. He had barely heard the Supreme commander's decision over the throbbing of his blood to freshly bruised areas of his head, neck, and body. But, he heard it. It was now the Survey corps property, and that was all that mattered.

As his restraints were removed and he was dragged, out of the Tribunal room he could hear Jean being called up by the tribal to discuss his interaction with the outsiders.

The outsider... The mention of them brought back a short but vivid memory of their appearance at the gate of Trost. He remembered vividly a metal man, overlooking the hole. Killing a titan in a single blow with an oversized weapon before turning it towards him in his titan form. His face had no featuresâ€¦ it was just a silver screen.

He recalled that the outsiders were even mentioned as possible escorts to destroy Eren if he ever stepped out of lineâ€¦

But who were they?

He had never met them in person, and no one was willing to discuss them in any detail when he was imprisoned.

Maybe now, I can find out who those people areâ€¦ But he lost his train of thought as he saw a procession of Military Police escorting in a tall individual.

As Eren attempted to make out the individual's details, he quickly realized it was the outsider who had stationed himself on the tower overlooking the hole in Trost. The man was far taller than Eren had originally thought, although that impression may have been forced on him after learning that Levi was so small. But regardless of that, this man-if he were human- looked like the incarnation of war. Signs of battle damage littered his armor and even though he was being closely escorted by over a dozen Military Police personnel. He carried himself with an air of authority, as if he was leading them to their destination. And as the Outsider passed by Eren, for a split second, it felt to Eren as if the silver faceless man had looked into his soul...

As Eren finished wrapping his mind around what he had just witnessed, he heard the doors to the Tribunal room close behind him.

* * *

><p>Trial of the outsiders<p>

Jean stood silently next to Commander Ervin of the Survey Corps. He had already recounted his interactions with the outsiders to the Supreme Commander of the military, Darius Zackly, and his hands were now quite moist with sweat. To his growing realization, he really didn't enjoy being in the limelight.

Thump

The doors to the Court room shut loudly as the single outsider was escorted to the center of the Court room. It was the Spartan. And only the Spartan.

Almost immediately Zackly began with a formal opening question to the Spartan as the Spartan made his way to the middle of the room, "What is your name outsider?"

The Spartan's response was crisp with military discipline, "Spartan, Beta Three-one-two, the sixth Spartan of Noble team. Call sign, Noble Six."

Zackly shifted his posture and adjusted his glasses to this soldier's formal response. "That's quite the title you have their Spartan but that's not your name is it?"

"No. No, it is notâ€¦ but, my name is of little important." That was quite an unusual statement to hear someone say about their own name but Zackly seemed to let that point slide.

"Then what are we to call you?"

"Spartan or Noble Six will suffice."

Zackly leaned back in his chair slightly, in thought to the Spartans response, before continuing, "You do understand why we are having this trial correct, Noble Six?"

"We were only able to put together the basics. You want to know if what we told your Survey Corps is the truth, and if we are a threat to your humanity."

"That is correct." Zackly sighed before continuing, "There are many in the capital and throughout the three military branches whom are weary of outsiders, and their potential reasons for being in our wallsâ€¦ but you have concluded the reason for this trial correctly." Zackly pointed to Six's right, "The Military Police view you as a threat to our society and are arguing for your complete surrender to our government. While," Zackly pointed to Six's left, "the Survey Corps is pushing to keep your original agreement afloat."

Zackly placed a few papers down in front of himself "Now, having heard out both side's arguments over your people, I would like you to explain to us, _who_, you people really are and if everything you told the Survey Corps is trueâ€¦"

"Where would you like me to begin?"

Zackly shifted his glasses once again while looking over Six, leaving Jean a little curious to see what the Supreme Commander would suggest to begin withâ€¦ "Your face." That left Jean a little dumb struck, but than Zackly continued "Since the discovery of Eren Jaeger being a Titan shifter, it has come to many people's concerns that you yourself are not quite human. Coming from many eye witness reports your actions almost seem to linger into superhuman territory, so that is where I would like to begin."

At first, the Spartan only stood there.

Then, nodding his head ever so slightly, with a quiet "alright". He raised both his hands to either side of his helmet, and with a long '**hiss**' his helmet depressurized before he pulled it off, revealing his face.

The audience in the room almost all at once burst into murmurs as his face became visible. Jean himself, was dumb struck by the man beneath the mask. He was nothing that Jean had expected, not that Jean had thought much of what the Spartan looked like beforehand.

The Spartans skin was ghostly white like it had been a long time since it had seen the light of day. His unnaturally blue eyes that shifted to a pure silver color at the edge of his pupils were sunk

deep into his bloodshot and tired eyes.

It was immediately apparent to everyone in the room that this man had not received a decent night sleep in many months. Throughout his face, fresh and old cuts and bruises shone as trophies from the battles he had fought only days and weeks earlier. But what drew Jeans attention was a relatively nasty cut that pierced through the side of the Spartan's lip which seemed to have reopened in the last few minutes. For a small fresh stream of blood dripped from the corner of his mouth.

But what was most surprising about this man's face was, even though he was obviously deeply sleep deprived he still had a fire in his eyes. Like there was some unfinished business that he still had to attend toâ€|

"Are you satisfied that I am human?" Was Six's short response to revealing his true face.

Zackly only nodded, leaving the Spartan to continue, "I have brought these seven data pads to help me show you who we are, and what has happened to us." The Spartan handed the data pads to one of the guards that still surrounded him before he pointed to the wooden platform that supported Generalissimo Zackly's seat. "I can also project images from my helmet onto the platform so that the crowd might see what you are seeing. But a white backdrop would need to be placed there."

After some discussion between Zackly and the other higher ups in the trial, Zackly eventually consented to the Spartans suggestion as the devices known as data pads were being passed out to the senior staff on both sides of the trial as well as Zackly and his two assistants. By the time the data pads had been passed out, a white cloth had been overlaid over the area the Spartan had suggested. The Spartan then hit a hidden button on his helmet bringing up an image of an eagle on the white screen and all seven data pads that it was also connected too.

* * *

><p>"This was Reach, the planet that we fled from." An image of a world, much like what Petra would imagine their planet looked like from space, took the place of the eagle with outstretched wings. "The images you see now were taken only weeks before the invasionâ€|" The planet was then replaced with an image of pure hell. A burning ball of fire that only the borders of the continents suggested was the same planet as the one shown moments before, "and this is what the planet looked like as we fled only three days ago."<p>

What could have done something like that? Petra thought to herself as she took in the image in front of her. _Why-_

"Lies! Nothing like that exists outside the walls!" It was one of the priests of the Wall Church, who was spitting their doctrine at the Spartan which broke Petra's thoughts.

At first Petra expected the Spartan to turn on the priest and force him to shut up, but to her surprise the Spartan merely took the verbal attack, without a word. The only thing the Spartan did do, that she noticed, was that the Spartan had tensed his hands into

fists at every mention of him or his people being liars. Eventually, Generalissimo Zackly was able to shut the fanatical priest up, with threats that he would be remove from the trial if he did not quite down, before apologizing to the Spartan, "I'm sorry for that interruption Noble Six but do continue."

* * *

><p>"â€|I will spare you many of the details of the three months of war that we took part in as Reach fell and we were left behindâ€| but I will show you enough to understand our situation."

"This video feed was taken on a mission just after we first found Covenant activity on Reach." The Spartan then played a clip from his own personal playback history, from operation: Nightfall. Six used this clip to show the locals the aliens that made up the Covenant, naming each as they came on screen. He also showed the locals the Guta's that he himself had mistaken the Titans for on the first day, and the resistance that had already formed on Reach to save the planet. Six watched the local's military eat it up with a mixture of shock, fear, and curiosity plastered on their faces.

Six cut that playback file right after one of the Reach's local militia, said, "Didn't like leaving it to someone else to protect our homes, so we came back." Leaving out the next part of the man's comment when he admits to stealing military weaponry and stashing it throughout the territory. Six then jumped to the segment of the mission where, he and Jun, finally made visual contact with the Covenant staging area.

* * *

><p>"â€|The following day our military, UNSC ground and air forces stationed on the planet, launched everything we had at the Covenant to try and smother them before they received reinforcements."<p>

As Ervin and the others watched the video feed once again begin anew, they were met with the sight of a group of green soldiers clad like the two Marines that they had met three days ago in a metal room. And if Hanji's information was correct then this video feed was that of Corporal Stacker, the female outsider they had already met in person.

"_-that's the plan! We are to hit them fast and loud! So, be ready! We roll out in ten!" Yelled one of the marines who seemed to be the highest ranking in the group before the far side of the metal room fell open revealing a UNSC military staging area._

Ervin was initially surprised by the number of soldiers that saturated the area, as Corporal Stacker moved out of the Pelican and into the staging area proper. He was then amused by the fact that that metal room was in fact an airship of sorts as, Corporal Stacker turned her head back for a moment to watch as the Pelican lifted off to allow another craft room to land.

As Ervin watched through Corporal Stacker's eyes move deeper into the depths of the forward operation base he was left with one burning question, _how could these people be losing with this many willing and able soldiers and such advanced weaponry?_

But as Corporal Stacker moved her way to the motor pool he started to see the wear of a long war on these foreigners. First Ervin noticed one marine, bend over and heave out his entire stomach contents as other soldiers talked about the coming battle before the video moved to a large groups of soldiers seemingly praying together as if none of them expected to leave the coming battle alive...

By the time Corporal Stacker took her position in one of the innumerable warthogs that lined the arid plains of the planet, Erving was beginning to wonder how very desperate these people really were.

That was when the soldier next to Corporal Stacker spoke up "Word is, there sending in Spartans with us. You don't think the one that saved us on Algalis will be among them do you?"

"One can hope." And it seemed like Stacker was going to continue that statement but was cut off as a new voice labeled as Colonel Erban Holland cut over her COM's.

"Commencing Operation: Tip of the Spear! Happy hunting everyone."

Some distance away someone yelled "Let's do this!" And all the vehicles began to barrel forward like hounds of war only to immediately be overtaken by large metal wing contingencies that shot forward to bring the fight to the enemy in the air. "Happy hunting, flyboys!"

But within minutes Corporal Stacker's radio was constantly pingging with calls of distress from different squads and ships throughout the basins expanse before she switched to a team band length. Her squad wasn't the first into the fray and the fighting was already becoming sever.

"Sixty seconds until contact range." The driver yelled as a swarm of purple flying ships took up formation towards Corporal Stacker and her warthog platoon

"Thirty seconds!"

The purple beasts were getting bigger as they approached but before anyone let loose there weapons on the banshees a monolith descended from the sky and shattered the banshee contingency.

"Shit! Looks like Delta squad was able to take out the Covenant anti-air."

"Fuck yeah! UNSC Grafton, shove it down their throats!"

Ervin was left in awe at the shear might and power of the Outsiders monolith of a vessel that, from the looks of it as the dark vessel descended, could have been as tall as Wall Rose. He wondered how quickly their own war with the Titans could end if just one of these vessels were brought to this planet

* * *

><p>Petra stood shocked as she watched through the eyes of the UNSC

soldier as their offensive begin to falter.<p>

How quickly that battle had changed, once the Covenant Supercarrier made itself know. Petra watched as whole squads were cut down around Corporal Stacker. She watched in mute horror as the UNSC Grifton which had arrived just in time to save Stacker's platoon minutes earlier was destroyed in secondsâ€|

"The UNSC Grifton was lost with all hands. One-thousand, nine-hundred and forty-five service men and women perished in an instant." Six solemnly stated as the video continued, hammering in the enormity of each lost vessel.

For the second time, Petra felt a tinge of regret about her initial opinion about this Spartan. As she turned away from the projected screen, she witnessed the Spartan stare with a distant, almost vague look in his eyes as he watched the falling wreckage of the UNSC Grifton. _It almost looks like he's reliving that failure..._.

She watched as he blinked when the video faded away and his hands relax before he began showing the next clip. One that seemed, given the slight delay in Six's words, like it was causing the Spartan some discomfort to even wish to show. "The next segment I will be showing you will be the last videoâ€| This was taken during the fall of New Alexandria."

* * *

><p>The video opened to a dimly lit metal locker room crowded with over a dozen men and women casually chatting while donning black armor. Several hard red lights were the predominant source of light in the room. Soon one voice dominated the room.

"_Alright, you all know the plan. We are dropping in low and fast to assist in the evacuation of New Alexandria. All squads are to stay fluid and be prepared to move quickly to areas that require the most assistance." Captain Schmitt scanned those around him as the last soldier finished donning his gear. "We will not be able to save everyone today, but as God as my witness we __**will**__ cheat death out of most of this city."_

He paused before asking, "Now, any questions?"

"_Yes Captain." One soldier called from the far side of the room while cradling a 99 Anti-Materiel Sniper Rifle, "Any chance you can please explain to our Lance Corporal over here that seven drops does not make you an ace." With that the man stuck his thumb out to point at another soldier with a freshly painted red diamond. The soldier in question responded to the comment by rising his middle finger to the other soldier._

Several in the group laughed to the scene of the two soldiers scuffle before Schmitt finally responded, "That wasn't really a question Private O'Brien. Besides its time to drop." And with that, everyone buckled themselves into their respective Drop pod seats before each pod began to shut.

_As the pods shut and began to turn and sink, a female voice boomed in the ODS's helmet, "Most troops enter the battle field by warthog or pelican. Not us, however. Oh no, we enter the battlefield

__**in**__ a different method. Tell me boys and girlsâ€| how will you enter battle?"__

In a chorus, the Trooper's yelled "We go feet first, ma'am!" And with that, the pods were released from the ships underside before joining the fray over the city.

As Schmitt's pod fell he turned on all frequencies to gauge where his men would be needed and his ears were bombarded with calls for help.

"_-There's still people down here!-"_

"_-District just dropped offline-"_

"_-Overrun. We'll hold this position as long as we can-"_

"â€"protect our evac!"_

"_-Just lost our bird-"_

Quickly he changed to local frequencies to determine who he could actually help as one of his men's pods took a direct hit from a Banshee's plasma bomb. Causing him to take evasive measures to prevent his own pod from taking any damage from the falling debris.

Soon his pod smashed into the ground offering the Captain seconds of silence, before the door of the pod shot out with a bang, releasing the Captain onto the battlefield.

In front of him, he witnessed a Brute minor rip the arms off of a recently dead civilian, before he and two of his squad mate's unleashed a barrage of bullets into the monster killing it only after it had gotten within feet of the Captain.

With the immediate threat taken care of, Schmitt turned his attention on regrouping his men as he scanned the burning city and watched as two civilian ships were blown out of the sky.

Once his men had gathered, he quickly ordered them to assist a military position secure an airport.-

As the video continued to play the trial room became deathly quiet in their entrancement to the burning city. With memories of their own district burning only three days ago, the wounds of knowing death and despair on a large scale was still fresh in their minds.

As the video played, most of the nobles and many of the military police turned away in disgust as they witnessed the true brutality of the Covenant or, more specifically, the Brutes. Six could even hear at least two individuals barge out of the room to vomit with a third losing his lunch before he could make it out of the room. But the Spartan would not break eye contact with the projector for, to look away would be to deny that these people ****lived****. And he would not take that from them.

Each person he watched die on the playback became yet another reason for him to fight. By the time Schmitt's squad finally ran into him on

the video, he did not see himself. All he saw were the souls of the lost manifest in his Spartan shell. All his fighting, abilities, and accomplishments on that and every other battlefield was theirsâ€|

As this video finally came to a stopping point, those within the tribunal finally knew him by a new name, Ackerson's Reaper. A name that followed him like the specters of the dead, which still lingered in his mind.

But before he could push those still, always bleeding internal wounds down to his core someone to his right began yelling.

"Lies! Your people haven't died to those monsters, this is simply deceit, and you're just trying to play the victim. Your people are nothing but charlatans trying to infiltrate our lands! I-" Six snapped his head to the source of the outburst. It was the priest again. Six's patients for this man was already running thin before but with the dead still lingering fresh in his head he could no longer contain himself completelyâ€|

"Be quite." The Spartan said through gritted teeth with a look that said noncompliance may result in injury or death. The man had crossed the line.

Six licked the away some fresh blood from the corner of his mouth before continuing. "I don't _care_ what you think about me. I don't _care_, if you think _I'm_ not human. That I simply am an _emotionless thing_. But don't you _ever_ say that no one died. So many people, which had _far_ more of a reason to live than you do died on that planet in _fear, pain, and loneliness_. Don't you _**EVER**_ belittle them by saying they never lived or _died_. You dishonor them as much as you dishonor yourself."

Six took a breath, "What you say about our dead is as much an insult as if someone were to say that no one died during the battle of Trost."

With that final sentence the room went silent for several seconds before Zackly smashed his hand against the table to prevent the priest from fanning the flames.

Zackly then sat there in silence as he weighed his choices and all the facts that were laid before him.

Finally, after several minutes of silence he looked down on the Spartan and said, "If that is all Spartan I think I will make my decision."

~END CHAPTER~

Hope you all enjoyed the chapter! It was a long time in the making...

Again, I want to thank my friend DeadzManWalking for Beta reading my story. And Anon8792 for offering some suggestions.

To all of you who have read this chapter, I thank you for your time and hope you all have a good day/night depending on when your reading this.

****Please if you are inclined, leave a constructive review or PM me if needed. In many ways they help fuel my writing.****

****I'll see you all next time!****

End
file.